



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

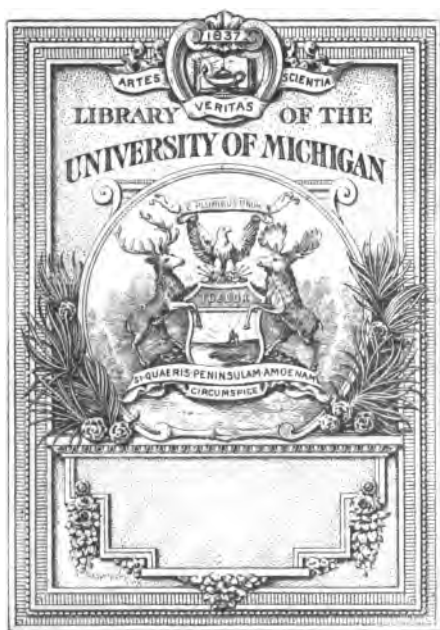
### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

848

R77

LP13



847  
15-17  
20-22





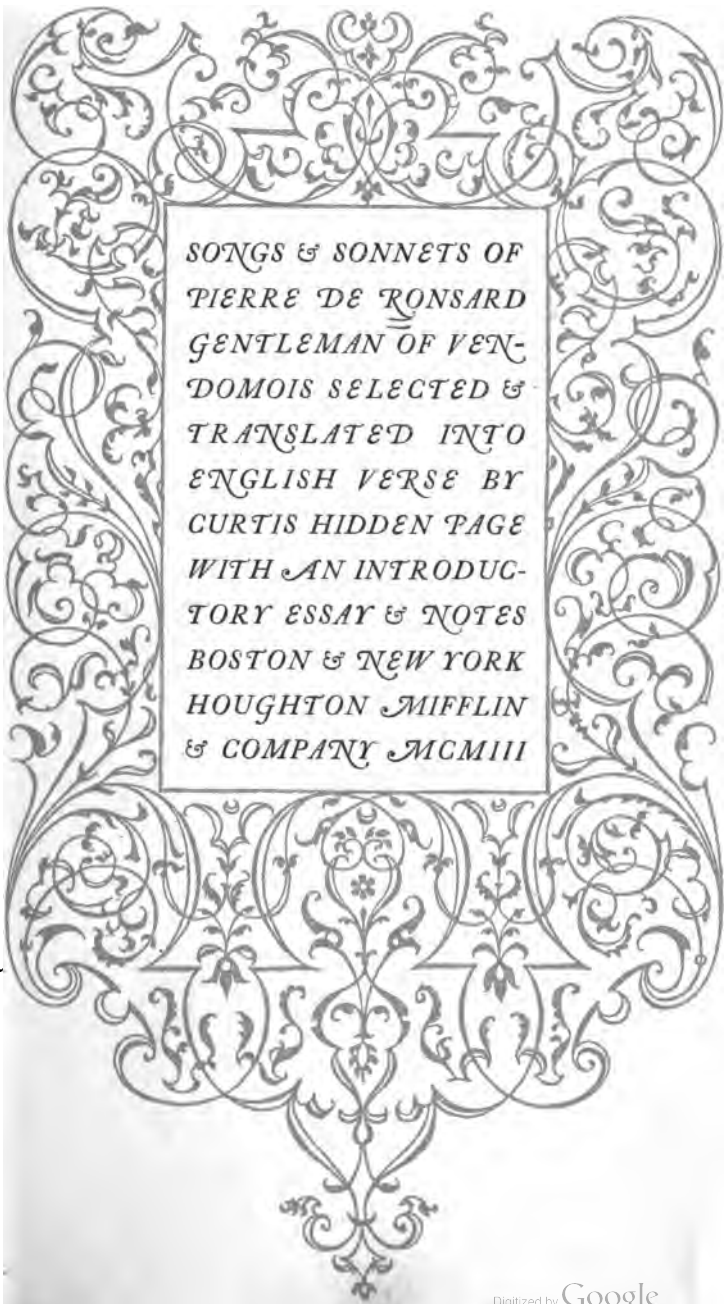


947  
Rm  
Hie



*RONSARD*





*SONGS & SONNETS OF  
PIERRE DE RONSARD  
GENTLEMAN OF VEN-  
DOMOIS SELECTED &  
TRANSLATED INTO  
ENGLISH VERSE BY  
CURTIS HIDDEN PAGE  
WITH AN INTRODUC-  
TORY ESSAY & NOTES  
BOSTON & NEW YORK  
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN  
& COMPANY MCMIII*

*Copyright 1903 by Curtis Hidden Page*  
*All rights reserved*

029 Mr 16-5-53

## TO RONSARD

MASTER OF ALL WHO CHARM MEN'S EARS WITH RHYME,  
RONSARD, I MARVEL STILL HOW WONDROUSLY  
JOINING TRUE SENSE WITH LARGE FREE HARMONY  
YOUR THOUGHT MADE WORDS ITS SLAVES, AND SOUND ITS  
MIME.

BUT MORE THAN PERFECT SPEECH OR ART SUBLIME  
I LOVE YOUR PASSION FOR OLD POESY,  
YOUR MAD, YOUR HOLY HOPE, THAT YOU SHOULD BE  
AN ORPHEUS, TO MEN BORN OUT OF DUE TIME.

SINCE SKIES AND WAVES AND WOODS AND COUNTRY-SIDE  
NO MORE HAD SOULS, BLACK GLOOM ENWRAPPED ALL  
THINGS.  
THE WORLD IS EMPTY, WITHOUT POESY.

YOU CAME, YOU SEIZED THE LYRE IN NOBLE PRIDE,  
YOU GAVE NEW GLORY TO ITS SEVEN STRINGS,  
AND TO THE GODS NEW IMMORTALITY.

SULLY PRUDHOMME

TOLEDO HAD A CUSTOM, LONG AGO,  
THAT ERE HE CLAIMED A WORKMAN'S NAME AND RIGHT  
EACH PRENTICE ARMORER FOR ONE LONG NIGHT  
MUST WATCH AND TOIL IN FURNACE-SMOKE AND GLOW,

A MASTER-WORK IN STEEL TO FASHION SO,  
SUPPLE AS REED, AND AS A FEATHER LIGHT.  
THEN ON THE BLADE OF IT, STILL WARM AND BRIGHT,  
HE GRAVED HIS MASTER'S NAME, HIS THANKS TO SHOW.

RONCARD, FOR THEE I HAVE TOILED THE WHOLE NIGHT  
LONG.

MY HUMBLE PRENTICE HAND FOR THEE HAS SOUGHT  
TO SHAPE THE SONNET, FLEXIBLE AND STRONG

EVEN AS A SWORD. MY SOUNDING HAMMER WROUGHT  
LONG THE TRUE METAL, SHINING FROM THE FLAME.  
NOW ON THE BLADE I GRAVE THY GLORIOUS NAME.

FRANÇOIS COPPÉE

FIRST CELEBRANT OF NEW-FOUND POESY,  
SINGER OF LIFE NEW-BORN IN EUROPE'S SPRING,  
LOVER OF YOUTH AND LOVE, THY PASSIONING  
RE-ECHOES IN MEN'S HEARTS ETERNALLY.

THY SONG'S TENSE THROBBINGS THRILL US LIKE THE CRY  
OF MUSIC'S SELF THAT ON A BREAKING STRING  
WEEPS THE SWIFT FATE OF EVERY BEAUTEOUS THING,  
AND OH! THE TEARS OF IT, THAT YOUTH MUST DIE.

WE TOO ARE YOUNG, RONSARD, AND PLEDGE THY NAME  
TO-DAY, O POET OF ROSES, POET OF FLAME,  
POET OF YOUTH ETERNAL, POET OF LOVE.

MY OWN SWIFT-DYING YOUTH TO THEE I GIVE,  
TO MAKE MEN KNOW THY LIVING FAME, AND PROVE  
THY FAITH — THAT YOUTH MAY DIE, BUT SONG MUST  
LIVE.

C. H. P.





## PIERRE DE RONSARD

Poet of the Renaissance



**I**N the self-same year of this so unhappy defeat of our arms at Pavia," says De Thou in the eighty-second book of his "Universal History," "there came into the world Pierre de Ronsard ; as though God had sought to compensate France for the debasement of her fame which that battle wrought (*jacturam nominis Gallici eo prælio factam*), and for the almost utter ruin of our fortunes which followed thereupon (*et secutum ex illo veluti nostrarum rerum interitum*), by the birth of so great a man." If the venerable judge and grave historian could speak in this way, we need not wonder at the attitude of Ronsard's biographer and disciple, Binet. "Great as was the misfortune of this unhappy disaster," he says, "it may well be doubted whether on that Fate-marked day there came not to France a benefit and glory yet greater, by the happy birth of her poet."

Ronsard was born, not, as Binet would have it, on the very day of the battle at which King Francis I. was defeated and captured by Charles V., but within a year of it, and by the Old Style calendar, in the same year. The exact date is probably September 11, 1524. He came of one of the noble families of France, going back at least to the reign of Philip of Valois ; and his mother's family

was allied, by various marriages, with the very greatest of the nation, the Montpensiers, the Condés, and the Guises themselves, branches of the royal blood. The Château de la Poissonnière, Ronsard's birthplace, is still standing, in the heart of that Loire country which is the very centre of France and the home of the Renaissance châteaux; not by La Loire itself, however, but by the smaller river Le Loir, which flows through Vendôme. Like other châteaux of the region, this one has its great central chimney built of hewn stones, on which are carved the armorial bearings of the family; you may still see there the flames and roses that represent Ronsard, for the name, said ancient heraldry, is from *Ronce*, the briar-rose, and *ardre*, to burn. Though modern etymology may disprove the derivation, it cannot take away the significance. He was the poet of flame and the poet of roses, if ever one was. The flowers themselves, when he was born—or so the old biography would have us think—knew that he was come to be their poet. “The day of his birth,” says Binet, “had like to have been that of his burial; for, as he was carried to be baptized, she that carried him, while crossing a field, dropped him unwittingly. But on tender grass and on flowers he fell, that received him the more softly.”

Louis de Ronsard, the poet's father, was a man of some importance, Knight of the Order of St. Michael, and Maître d'Hôtel to Francis I. He was chosen, after the battle of Pavia, to take the King's two sons to Spain as hostages, and obtain their father's release; and he was employed on other missions of trust. He was something of a poet, too, at odd moments; that is, he could write fair verse in Marot's vein. But he was a gentle-

man of the old school, untouched by the Renaissance idea of the nobility of poetry ; and he would not let a son of his take such trifling seriously. In the " Epistle to Pierre Lescot," which is a sort of autobiography, Ronsard tells us : —

*Often my father scolded me, and said :  
" Why waste thy days, poor fool, and tire thy head,  
Courtling Apollo and the Muses nine !  
What shalt thou gain from all thy friends divine,  
Save but a lyre, a bow, a string, a song  
That like to smoke is quickly lost, along  
The wind, and like the dust in air dispersed."*

So the wise father admonishes, bidding him

*" Leave this poor trade that ne'er advanced a man,  
Even the most skilful" . . .*

nor ever even fed him, he adds — witness your Homer himself, who " had never a red " (*n'eut jamais un liard*) : —

*" His Muse, whose voice, men say, was passing sweet,  
Could never feed him, and in hunger sore  
He begged his wretched bread from door to door."*

Be a lawyer, advises the father : then you can

*" Talk all you please, at some poor man's expense."*

Or embrace the " moneyed skill " of Medicine, that other daughter of Apollo to whom he gave all goods and honors, leaving her sister Poetry only a " musty lyre." Or best of all be courtier and soldier ; for the king is quick to reward those who serve him in war. In short, be anything save poet ! *But*, says Ronsard : —

*How hard it is to change our nature's bent !  
 For threats or prayers or courteous argument  
 I could not banish verses from my head —  
 My love of song grew more, the more he said. . . .  
 Scarce twelve years old, hid in the valleys deep,  
 Or far from men, on wooded hill-sides steep,  
 I wandered careless of all else but verse,  
 And answering Echo would my songs rehearse.  
 Fauns, Satyrs, Pans, Dryad and Oread,  
 About me danced, in claspéd tunics clad,  
 And leaping Ægipans with hornéd head,  
 And gentle troops of fairies fancy-bred.*

It is a pretty picture of the poet-boy, for whom all nature is alive with comradeship ; and reminds us a little of the boy Shelley.

No wonder he pined when he was shut up in a college, under a pedantic master. After six months' trial, in which he "got no good," as he says, his father let him come home ; and later took him to court and gave him as page to the Dauphin of France. This plan worked better, for Ronsard was a born courtier as well as passionate nature-lover and poet. The Dauphin died soon after, and Ronsard was then attached to the suite of James of Scotland, who had come to marry Madeleine, the daughter of King Francis ; and with him went to Scotland, spending nearly three years at the court there, and six months in England on his way back to France. Again a page in the royal family, he was sent to travel with several diplomatic missions : to Holland, to Scotland again, to Piedmont, to Germany. He was a favorite of King Francis, and especially of his son Henry,

who was to be King Henry II., and who loved him most for his athletic prowess, and "would never play a match but with Ronsard on his side."

Thus the wishes of his father bade fair to be fulfilled — in fact, success at court was assured — when a fever caught in Germany brought on partial deafness, and unfitted him for the life of a courtier — "who should be dumb rather than deaf," suggests Ronsard. So he gave up his career; happy, it may be, to have this good excuse for not "succeeding in life," and for listening no more to the babble of court ambitions, but to the "inner voices."

Nature had taught him. The life of the world had taught him. Now, reversing the usual order, books were to teach him last. He had acquired a taste for ancient learning at the courts of France and of Scotland, where the Renaissance was in the air. His trip to Germany had been made in the company of Lazare de Baif, that noble humanist who, when ambassador to Venice, left his post and travelled over the mountains to Rome, to attend the courses of a Greek professor there. Ronsard was full of the Renaissance enthusiasm for the classics, but he knew as yet only the modern languages. So this boy of eighteen, who was already a travelled man of the world, set himself to school again, and shut himself up in the Collège Coqueret to begin the work of boys of ten or twelve. And there he worked for seven years.

It was no ordinary college, this Collège Coqueret in the heart of the old Latin Quarter. And its master was no ordinary pedant, but a poet himself — in Latin and Greek only, of course, but still no scorner of poetry in

the vulgar tongue. Here gathered the "Brigade," as it was called before it knew itself for a new constellation of stars shining in the new heavens, and took the more pretentious name of "the Pleiades." Beside Ronsard, the most important members of the group were D'Aurat, their teacher or rather leader in learning — older, of course, but still their comrade ; Jean Antoine de Baif, the son of Lazare de Baif, who, though eight years younger than Ronsard, could at first help him with his Greek ; and Joachim du Bellay, whom Ronsard had met on a journey, at an inn ; they had talked together of the new dawn, had liked each other, and Du Bellay had come to live with Ronsard at the college. This little group of comrades was the very centre and hotbed of the Renaissance in France. They set themselves with passionate industry to acquiring the new knowledge, D'Aurat leading them on. When it was time to approach the difficulties of *Æschylus*, which hardly a man in France had yet attacked, he called Ronsard one day and read him "at a breath" the "*Prometheus Bound*," "to give him," as the old biography says, "the more eager taste for this new knowledge that had as yet not passed the seas to come to France." And Ronsard exclaimed, we can hear with what passionate enthusiasm, "My master, my master, why have you so long hidden these riches from me !" Greek, alas ! is hardly studied thus in our colleges to-day. "With what desire and noble emulation," says Binet, "did they toil together !." Ronsard, who had spent his youth in courts, being accustomed to watch late, studied until two or three o'clock past midnight ; and then going to his bed, woke Baif, who rose and took the candle, and did not let

the place grow cold." That pictures the spirit of the Renaissance — studying by relays, as it were. We have another such picture in Ronsard's sonnet "To His Valet," demanding three days of quiet to read the *Iliad* through. As Sainte-Beuve says, most of the Renaissance is in this sonnet — its devouring passion of study, its devotion to the classics, its home-like familiarity with the Olympian Gods, its love of revel, and its love of love; the last being strongest of all, its claim superseding all others. This sonnet shows, too, how their devotion to study, passionate as it was, did not shut out life and love. It was in these years that Ronsard, "following the court to Blois" (for these students, all noble gentlemen, sometimes returned to court) first saw his Cassandra. Nor did books shut out nature, or comradeship. Many were the excursions to wood and field, and many the open-air revels, that these boon companions of the Collège Coqueret had in those years when they were turning by night and by day, as Horace recommends, the leaves of ancient learning. "Summer's Idlesse," the "Comrade Song," "Wine and Death," and "The Praise of Roses" give us some conception of their comrade-spirit. There are many songs like these, among the verses of the Pléiade; but not in all their works, I think, is there a single tavern-song, such as are so common at most other periods from Villon to Verlaine.

In the mean time there were serious talks, and high plans made — plans to enrich their own language with a literature that should rival in splendor those of old. The noblest thing about this group of scholars and worshippers of past beauty is their belief in their own language and their own new country, in which nothing had

yet been achieved. A hundred and fifty years before the “*Querelle des anciens et des modernes*,” more than a hundred years before Racine, and fifty years before Shakspeare — when modern literatures, except in Italy, ? had not yet begun to be — a mind in love with the beautiful necessarily found its ideal in the completed and perfected literatures of the past. When almost every scholar or man of letters who felt that he had anything of real importance to say, or anything worth preservation as literature to express, thought he must put it in Latin, and when rhyme was considered a mere amusement of the vulgar, it took faith for these students to believe that literature was possible in their own tongue, and courage to attempt to create it. The men of the *Pléiade* had this faith and courage, and that is their glory. They fear not to launch their manifesto, proudly proclaiming what can and shall be done, even before it is begun; and they call it “*The Defending and the Making Illustrious of the French Language*.”

Written by Du Bellay, this “*Défense et Illustration*” expresses the ideas of the whole group, as shaped chiefly by Ronsard, who was now their recognized leader. In fact, no better summary of its doctrines could be made than is found in these few phrases of Ronsard’s in the Preface of the “*Franciade* : ”. “I counsel thee then to learn diligently the Greek and Latin languages, nay also the Italian and Spanish; and then, when thou knowest these perfectly, come back like a good soldier to thine own flag, and compose in thy mother-tongue, as did Homer, Hesiod, Aristotle, Theophrastus, Virgil, Livy, Sallust, Lucretius, and a thousand others, who all spoke the same language as the ploughmen and servants of their

day. For it is the crime of lese-majesty, to abandon the language of thine own country, which is alive and blossoming, and seek to dig up I know not what dead ashes of the ancients. . . . I beseech those of you, to whom the Muses have granted their favor, that you no more Latinize and Grecanize (as some do, more for display than duty) but take pity on your poor mother-tongue. . . . For it is a far greater thing to write in a language that flourisheth to-day and is even now received of peoples, towns, cities, and states, being alive and native to them, and approved by kings, princes, senators, merchants, and traffickers over-seas, than to compose in a language dead and mute, buried beneath the silence of so long space of years, which is learned no more save at school by the master's whip and the reading of books. . . . It were better, like a good citizen of thine own country, to toil at a lexicon of the old words of Arthur, Lancelot, and Gawain, or a learned commentary of the Romaunt of the Rose. . . . For we speak no more before Roman senators. . . . One language dies and another springeth from it alive, even as it pleases the decree of Fate and the command of God, who will not suffer mortal things to be eternal as He is — and to whom I humbly pray, gentle reader, that He both give thee His Grace, and the Desire to enrich the language of thine own country."

These are the chief ideas of the "Défense ;" it bids the poet first to "bury himself" in the best authors, chiefly the Greek, and "devour them, digest them, make them bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh." Then, choosing national subjects, and using his own native speech, let him produce as the ancients did, and

as the Italians have done, new poetry to the glory of his nation. "Up, then, Frenchmen ! march boldly upon that haughty Roman city ; and with its spoil adorn your own temples and altars. . . . Invade mendacious Greece . . . and sack the sacred treasures of the Delphic temple ! Fear no more the mute Apollo, nor his false oracles, nor his blunted arrows !" You can see Du Bellay stand, like the Herald-at-Arms in a Renaissance painting, and hear him call in trumpet-tone to all, that they rally to this new army for the Defending and Making Glorious of France and the French tongue.

The "Défense" appeared in 1549, and marks the beginning of modern French literature. Then, carrying out the program, there came quickly, one upon another, the works of the school. Ronsard's first four books of "Odes," containing all the "Pindaric" odes, appeared in 1550 ; his "Amours," and a fifth book of odes in 1552. Before 1560 there were six other editions of the "Amours," each enlarged, and three of the Odes, beside no less than twenty new poems or collections, including the first book of the "Hymns" (extended mythological poems like the "Homeric Hymns," and also allegorical and philosophical poems) in 1555, and the second book in 1556. A collected edition of his works was published in 1560, and included for the first time the first five books of the "Poems," the sixth and seventh of which appeared in 1569. In 1562 and 1563 came the "Discours" and the "Remonstrance au Peuple de France," in 1564 the "Epistles," in 1565 the "Elegies" and the "Art of Poetry," and in 1572 the first four books of his epic, the "Franciade."

No other poet made any such broad attempt as is

represented in this mass of work, to reproduce in a modern vulgar tongue all the forms of the classic literatures. Ronsard tried to create for France, in French, the Elegy, the Eclogue, the "Hymn," the Horatian Ode, the great Pindaric Ode in all its sweep and fulness, the light Anacreontic, the Epigram, the Inscription, the Idyl, the higher Satire, the Epic. If he omitted one of the great forms, the drama—and he did not omit it entirely, for in his earliest days of writing he made an adaptation of the "Ploutos" of Aristophanes which was played at the Collège Coqueret, and was the first French comedy—it was because some of his disciples, notably Jodelle, were working under him in that field, leaving him the higher and harder forms (as they were then considered) of the Pindaric ode and the epic. Perhaps, too, it was because in that early attempt of the "Ploutos" he had recognized that the drama, being subject to material conditions from which the other forms of poetry are free, could not yet exist in France. It was a question not of writing dramas, but of creating the theatre; and it took nearly a century more to do this. In all the other forms of poetry, from the lightest to the highest, his attempt was notable; and the few in which his achievement was less so were, with the exception of the epic, forms in which no modern poet has achieved success.

On this side, then, he is the representative poet of the Renaissance. And this is really its most important side—not the digging up of a dead past, but the birth of a new world and a new art from the buried old. The true significance of the Renaissance lies in the true meaning of the word, which is not resurrection but re-birth. As Goethe symbolizes it in the child of Faust and Helen,

the Renaissance had the mediæval for its father and the classical for its mother, but it was not a reproduction or a resurrection of either, it was the offspring of both, and was a new birth, a new age, a new art — the beginning of the modern, even more than the revival of the ancient. Ronsard loved the mediæval, while so many smaller men of the Renaissance despised it; he knew the old romances, the “Roman de la Rose” in both its parts, and the lyric poets down to Marot; but he worshipped above all the newly discovered treasures of old Greece and Rome, as any true man of the Renaissance must. He knew not only the Latin writers but the Greek directly, in fact, he learned Greek before he did Latin; and he knew not only the easier Greek authors but the more difficult, and attached himself by preference, at least during the earlier part of his work, to the three most difficult of all, Æschylus, Aristophanes, and in chief Pindar, rivalling the most enthusiastic humanists in the passion of his scholarship. Thus he represents the Renaissance in its double origin. He represents it, too, in the freshness and richness of its young life in Europe’s Spring-time; in its intensity of life, and its tense realization of life’s bitter briefness; in its passionate worship of Poetry and Beauty; and in its strange sincere mingling of Pagan thought and emotion and conduct with Christian belief. But it is by the attempt to create in his modern tongue a complete new literature, that should have all the glories of the old literatures in all their forms and aspects, that he represents it best, and is its poet.

He was so recognized at once. Coming at the very height of the Renaissance movement and in the central

nation of Europe, he was hailed by all Europe as its "Apollo" and its "Prince of Poets." The slight opposition which the court poets of the older schools could make to his success was quickly swept away before him; and as one work succeeded another, the success was transformed into a triumph. He was the favorite and friend of six successive kings of France, from Francis I., the first Renaissance king, to Henry IV., whose birth and marriage he celebrated, and whose accession he looked forward to and longed for, as the only hope of peace for France. Queens and princesses the most powerful and beautiful of their time vied with each other to be his patronesses: from Catherine of the Medici to Elizabeth of England, who once sent him a great diamond in token of her esteem; from Marguerite of Savoy, the daughter of King Francis (not that other Marguerite, King Francis' sister, who was Marot's friend) — the type of all that was sweet and pure and noble in the women of the sixteenth century, in short, of perfect goodness, united in rare combination with brilliance and beauty, who was his champion at court in the early quarrels, and his lifelong friend — to Mary, Queen of Scots, the bright star of his inspiration in her brief reign as Queen of France, the subject of many of his most beautiful poems and of one of his noblest sonnets, to whom in her captivity his volumes were dedicated, who sent him out of her poverty rich gifts inscribed "To Ronsard, the Apollo of the Muses' fountain," and who said of him on her last day of life (at least so our own poet Swinburne makes her say, and there is no reason why we should disbelieve him): —

“ Ah ! how sweet  
Sang all the world about those stars that sang  
With Ronsard for the strong mid star of all,  
His bay-bound head all glorious with grey hairs,  
Who sang my birth and bridal.”

The Kings and Princes of the realm of poetry recognized him likewise as their chief, from his followers Du Bellay, Jodelle, Garnier, and the rest, to his rivals like Saint-Gelais; scholars lauded him in Latin verse, and in Greek, and in the lesser languages, from his own master D'Aurat to those of distant nations. One, Saint-Marthe, called him “the prodigy of nature and the miracle of art.” Tasso came and sat at his feet to learn, submitting to him the first cantos of the “Jerusalem Delivered.” And Montaigne said in one of his Essays, that “in the parts of his work in which he excelled, he hardly fell short of the perfection of the ancients.” There was no higher praise that a poet of the Renaissance could receive.

Yet all this did not spoil him. He was proud indeed. That he had always been. It was born in his race. He even believed himself the chief of all poets of his time and country — as in truth he was. He believed, too, that he was the first to give to his country something that could be called poetry by those who knew also the literatures of the past and of Italy; he boasted that he first “Pindarized” and “Petrarquized” in France. He held himself aloof from the “common crowd,” like Horace, and boasted the consecration of the Muse’s kiss. He thought himself a poet, in short — and he thought that in this world there is no higher thing than to be a true

poet. But just because he knew how high a thing it is to be a true poet, and because he truly knew the great poets of the past, he was humble too. He felt sometimes that among the poets of all time he was one of the least, and one most dependent upon others. He even called himself but a half-poet. He made his *Franciade* kneel before the *Æneid* and *Iliad*, and worship them — as it ought. Then, too, there was another saving grace in his proud and contradictory and charming personality. The favorite of courts was a recluse; the singer of princes was a lover of nature (how different in this from all the courtier-poets of two following centuries !); and the owner of abbeys and *châteaux* (for material success had come too) was a gardener — he must cultivate his roses, yes, and his cabbages, with his own hands; and he must wander alone through his woods and on his hill-sides, communing with a book created by one “greater than he,” or with Nature herself, “created by One greater still.”

Only of one thing he was always sure, in his pride or his humility : that he had given to France a literature new and greater than she had had before — which was true; and that therefore his name and fame could never die — and no poet’s hope of continuous immortality was ever so completely disappointed. The story of Ronsard’s reputation is perhaps the most dramatic contrast in all the history of literary fame and oblivion. There were many splendid editions of his works, till 1623, and a poor one in 1629; then, for two hundred years, silence; not an edition; not even a volume of extracts.

Why? . . . Because Malherbe had come, and im-

posed new ideals upon literature. There was to be no more freedom, no more nature, no more freshness of life, but only perfect regularity of form, and wonderful analysis and picturing of human emotions such as they might appear in the dress of court and town. Symmetry was substituted for harmony in the structure of verse, eloquence was substituted for lyricism in its substance. A noble eloquence indeed it was — not merely rhetorical, as it often seems to the narrow Anglo-Saxon taste, incapable of appreciating French classic literature — and it produced high and beautiful and truly poetic work. But it struck dumb all singing; and the silence lasted till Chénier and Lamartine, Béranger, Musset, and Victor Hugo. Malherbe one day took a copy of Ronsard, and crossed out the lines which struck him as the worst. Another day he crossed out the few that were left. Balzac — the Balzac of the seventeenth century, Balzac the little, not Balzac the great — in one of those carefully polished "Letters" that delighted the Hôtel de Rambouillet, wrote to Chapelain the prosy: "Monsieur de Malherbe, and Monsieur de Grasse, and yourself, must be very little poets, if Ronsard be a great one" . . . and knew not how true he spoke! When Boileau, the final judge of all such matters, came, the question of Ronsard's place was long since settled and forgotten. In his history of French poetry he condemned Ronsard without a hearing, as one who "in French talked nothing but Greek and Latin" (poor Ronsard! the champion and almost the creator of the French poetic language!), and dismissed him contemptuously as "that proud poet fallen from so high." From Boileau on, even the name was almost forgotten.

Then after two centuries came the rehabilitation — or the resurrection — of Ronsard's fame, in that new Renaissance of poetry which made glad the early years of the nineteenth century. Sainte-Beuve published in 1827 his "Survey of French Poetry in the Sixteenth Century," and supplemented it in the following year with a volume of selections from Ronsard. The old editions were exhumed from the dust of libraries. Finally a new complete edition was undertaken in 1857 by Prosper Blanchemain, and finished in 1867. To its last volume almost all the younger poets of importance contributed in verse their homage to Ronsard, as Sainte-Beuve had already contributed his. More recently a complete edition of all the poets of the *Pléiade* has been published, under the editorship of Marty-Laveaux. There are also many books of selections. In short, the poetry and the fame of Ronsard and the *Pléiade* are now alive again. ✓

Of course not all of Ronsard's work has been restored to real life. "No man," said Voltaire, looking ruefully at his fifty volumes, "can take the long journey to posterity encumbered with all that baggage." No poet, except the very greatest, can carry more than one substantial tome on that long journey. In Ronsard's work there is enough that deserves to survive to make one fair-sized volume. It would include, not any of his epic — that is a failure ; probably none of the eclogues — they are of the artificial pastoral type, full of contemporary interest because they usually present noble or famous personages of his own day disguised as shepherds and shepherdesses, and possessing touches, but too rare, of genuine nature-poetry ; possibly none of the Pindaric odes, though it is hard to give this verdict — we should

surely include, for instance, if it were only one tenth its length, that noble ode on the Progress of Poetry which was so famous in its day, and which deserves, for the scholar's reading, to be placed beside or even above Gray's ode on the same subject — but it is “too heavy baggage” for posterity ; and none of the “Discours,” alas !—great as are their interest and their power, noble as are their patriotism and their appeal for peace and unity — they were creatures of the time and died with it, but they set the standard of satire and of national poetry in France ; but some of the elegies, yes, for they are briefer, and in them he is a true and sincere poet of Nature and of love ; some few of the “Hymns,” like that “On Death,” which Chastelard, Brantôme tells us, carried to the scaffold for breviary, taking Ronsard as his only father-confessor ; and a very few of the longer “Poems ;” but most of all, his lyrics and sonnets and lighter odes — not the greatest of his work, but the most beautiful, and the most portable on that “long journey.”

The sonnets stand halfway between Petrarch and Shakspeare, and are almost as anticipatory of the later poet as they are reminiscent of the earlier. Ronsard is one of the few masters of the sonnet. It is probably safe to say that he uses it with more variety of effect than any other poet, and yet without seeming to force its character. He makes it descriptive, epigrammatic, epic, philosophic, elegiac, idyllic, dramatic ; he even makes it purely lyrical. Brunetière, a critic not given to superlatives nor wont to praise, says : “I know of no more beautiful sonnets than those of Ronsard.” The statement surprises, but can it be refuted ? Grandeur there are, in Milton and

Wordsworth; nobler, perhaps, from Dante to Petrarch; more wonderful in perfection of form and in power of condensation or suggestiveness, among Hérédia's; but more beautiful, no — though we may perhaps put with the best of Ronsard's some few of Keats'. Keats, once in his brief life, made a translation; and it was from a sonnet of Ronsard's.

Then there are the lyrics — lyrics that have almost the cutting pathos of the Greek regrets for fleeting youth and life, or the light sincerity of Herrick, or even snatches of that peculiar grace and haunting naturalness of exquisite melody which give to our early Elizabethans the sweetest note in all the gamut of song. Ronsard's mastery of form, in an almost unformed language, is marvellous. He was the first creator of more than a hundred different lyric stanzas — the most prolific inventor of rhythms, perhaps, in the history of poetry. He ranges from the great ten-line stanza, a favorite of Victor Hugo's, to the so-called "Hawthorn-tree" metre, which, difficult as it apparently is with its quick-returning rhymes that dart in and out like squirrels at play and respond to each other like answering bird-notes, never even in a long poem like the "Spring Love-Song" seems for a moment, as Ronsard uses it, to interrupt or hamper or turn aside the movement of the thought.

The three great lyric themes, nature, and love, and death, are never long absent from his work, and usually they are interwoven with each other in it. He is more a poet of nature than any other French poet save Lamartine. Unlike Lamartine, he seeks in nature not a refuge from life, but a living comradeship. Unlike Wordsworth, he is not so much the observer and inter-

preter of nature as its passionate lover. All nature is alive to him, even as it was to the Greeks, and as it has been to no other modern except, at moments, to Shelley. His nature-mythology is less of the mind, like that of most moderns, or even of the imagination, like Shelley's, than of the heart. His love-poetry in particular is permeated with nearness to nature and her spirit.

Of love Ronsard has sung in all its phases, from the simplest human passion to the philosophic love of Dante and the Platonists, the shaping power of the universe and of man's soul, the

“ Love that moves the sun and the other stars,”

which he celebrates, without quite believing in it, in “ Love's Quickening ” and other sonnets. If his expression of love, with all its “ burnings ” and “ freezings,” sometimes seem insincere, it is to be remembered that he was speaking the dialect of his time, a dialect that to us seems artificial, and to a certain extent, but far less than we think, was so. Every age that has a character has its dialect — and we can hardly assert that we have a nobler one than that of the Renaissance. Often, too, Ronsard speaks the universal language, which is absolute simplicity. But even the touches of artificiality grow to seem sincere, and only add to the charm of these old-world loves of the golden Renaissance : the love of Cassandra, his boyhood's adoration, whom he first saw in the glorious beauty of her girlhood as the Nymph of the meadow of Blois, —

*Walking among the flowers, herself a flower,*

a little lady of the court, but simply clad, and wandering free with wind-blown golden hair — Cassandre Sal-

viati du Pré she was, and in her veins ran blood that was born of Beatrice's and of Laura's nation, and was to be transmitted through succeeding generations till it flowered again in the greatest passion-poet of France, Alfred de Musset ; and the love of Marie, the simple country girl of Anjou, the passion of his ardent youth ; and last of Helen, the Lady Helen of Surgères, whom the Queen-mother bade him celebrate, and whom he grew to love with the complete love of the mature man and poet, and with something of the bitter intensity of premature old age — a love that with the advancing years grew into friendship. " Dear dead women," they live still in his verse.

As the years, whose flight he would so fain have stayed, passed by, his characteristic theme of " Gather Rose-buds " little by little disappeared from his work. There came in its stead a quiet acceptance of life, and of death as the completion of life, that are classic in their simplicity and strength. This theme too, which found its expression in many poems like " Life-Philosophy " and " Transit Mundus," became characteristic of Ronsard ; and his treatment of it is the more valuable as it is the rarer in modern literature.

Finally, the noblest of all his poems are those on Poetry itself. This is the theme for which he cared the most. It is intertwined for him with each one of the others. Nature is to him always the home of the Muses. Love itself is to him the impulse to sing, and finds its true consecration in song. The thought of death brings with it always the thought of fame in living poetry — that is its justification, its consolation, the one sure immortality. All else may die — kings, em-

pires, and the unsung fame of noble deeds — but, says Ronsard in one of his Pindaric odes : —

*True poetry forever lasts,  
Obdurate 'gainst the years.*

The men of the Pléiade introduced into France a new conception of poetry. “Surely ’t would be a thing but too easy, and worthy of all contempt, to win eternal fame,” says Du Bellay in the “Défense,” “if mere natural facility, granted even to the unlearned, might suffice to create a work worthy of immortality. Nay !— he that would fly abroad upon the lips of men, must long abide shut fast in his chamber ; he that would live in the memory of posterity, must, as though dead unto himself, labor and oft sweat and tremble ; and even as our court poets do drink, eat, and sleep at their ease, so much must he endure hunger and thirst and long watchings.” Still nobler are the words of Ronsard : “Above all things,” he says in his “Art of Poetry,” “thou shalt have the Muses in reverence, yea truly in most especial veneration. Thou shalt never make them serve low ends, but shalt hold them dear and holy, as being the daughters of Jupiter, that is to say of God, who through them by His sacred grace first made known to ignorant peoples the excellence of His majesty. . . . And since the Muses will dwell in no heart save it be true, holy, and virtuous, thou must be first good, then open-hearted and generous, . . . true in spirit, letting no thing enter into thy thoughts that is not super-human and divine. Above all let all thine imaginings be high, noble, and beautiful.” . . .

Almost all poets have worshipped Poetry and the

Muses with living faith and fervent self-devotion. There have been exceptions, like Lamartine and Byron, even among the great ; and they have been the lesser poets for it. But hardly one has worshipped and believed with the fervor of Ronsard. It is a consecration to live in his atmosphere of high devotion to poetry ; it is a joy to serve him, and try to spread a little the fame for which he cared so much ; and to give him honor in each new age is a duty. For this was his faith — that though the leaf of the rose may fade and fall, the leaf of the laurel shall be ever green.



# THE CONTENTS



## YOUTH, LOVE, AND POESIE

<i>True Gift</i>	Page 3
<i>Love's Conquering</i>	4
<i>One only Aim and Thought</i>	5
<i>Love's Charming</i>	6
<i>A Picture and a Plea</i>	7
<i>Love's Perfect Power</i>	8
<i>Even unto Death</i>	9
<i>Love's Wounding</i>	10
<i>Love's Submission</i>	11
<i>Cassandra's Prophecy</i>	12
<i>Love's Attributes</i>	13
<i>A Proper Roundelay</i>	14
<i>Love-Joy, Love-Sorrow</i>	16
<i>Love's Comparings</i>	17
<i>The Ways of Love</i>	18
<i>Madrigal</i>	19
<i>To the Bees</i>	20
<i>"Love me, love me not"</i>	22

<i>The Mourning Dove</i>	23
<i>Love's Quickening</i>	24
<i>Love's Healing</i>	25
<i>Love the Teacher and Inspirer</i>	26
<i>In Absence</i>	27
<i>Love's Solitude</i>	28
<i>Absence in Spring</i>	29
✓ <i>The Thought of Death</i>	30
<i>Remembered Scenes</i>	31
<i>The Muses' Comforting</i>	32
<i>The Poet's Gift</i>	33

### LIFE, JOY, AND SONG

✓ <i>To His Valet</i>	37
<i>Summer's Revel</i>	38
— <i>To the Hawthorn-tree</i>	40
<i>New April</i>	42
<i>The Courtier's Return</i>	44
<i>"Marie, arise!"</i>	45
<i>Spring Love-Song</i>	46
✓ <i>Gather Rose-Buds</i>	51
✓ <i>Carpe Diem</i>	52
<i>Love's Lesson</i>	54
<i>To the Skylark</i>	55
✓ <i>Wine and Death</i>	59

<i>Nature's Drinking-Song</i>	61
✓ <i>Comrade Song</i>	62
✓ <i>The Praise of Roses</i>	64

### THE ROSE OF LOVE

<i>"Sweet-heart, come see if the Rose"</i>	69
<i>Life's Roses</i>	70
<i>Love's Token</i>	71
<i>Messenger Nightingale</i>	72
<i>Helen's Beauty</i>	74
✓ <i>Kisses and Death</i>	75
<i>With Flowers</i>	76
<i>"If this be Love"</i>	77
<i>Love's Accounting</i>	78
<i>Love's Recording</i>	79
<i>Love's Flower</i>	80
<i>Her Immortality</i>	81

### LIFE, SONG, AND DEATH

¶ <i>Twixt Love and Death</i>	85
<i>Counsel for Kings</i>	86
<i>To Mary Stuart, Queen of France</i>	87
<i>Regret, for Mary Stuart's Departure</i>	88
<i>The Same Subject</i>	89
<i>For Mary Stuart, in Captivity</i>	92

<i>In Dear Vendôme</i>	93
<i>To the Woodsman of Gastine</i>	97
<i>The Power of Song</i>	100
<i>The Poet's Titles</i>	101
<i>Laurel's Worth</i>	102
<i>Life-Philosophy</i>	104
<i>The Happy Life</i>	106
<i>Farewell to Love</i>	108
<i>On Death</i>	109
<i>Transit Mundus</i>	110
<i>Permanet Gloria</i>	112
<i>Ronsard's Tomb</i>	113

*YOUTH, LOVE, AND POESIE*



## TRUE GIFT

**A**s a young maiden, in the morning air  
Of Spring-time, when the year with youth is  
thrilled,  
Goes seeking through the garden freshly tilled  
Roses and lilies to adorn her hair,

But finding not by any roses rare  
Nor other flowers the new-made garden filled,  
Takes simple ivy, and with fingers skilled  
Tresses a wreath to crown and make her fair,

So I — who in my orchard find no roses  
Nor any flowers whose worth is worthy you,  
Pinks, lavender, pansies, nor marigold —

Bring you this bit of verse, love-twined and true,  
In hope its simpleness more worth may hold  
Than heaped-up flowers no thoughtful care dis-  
poses.

## LOVE'S CONQUERING

**I**F 't please you see how Love's might overcame,  
How He attacked and how He conquered me,  
How my heart burns and freezes for His glee,  
How He doth make His Honor of my Shame ;

If 't please you see my youth running to claim  
What brings it nought but pain and contumely,  
Then come and read, and know the agony  
Of which my Goddess and my God make game,

Then you shall know that Love is reasonless,  
A sweet deceit, a dear imprisonment,  
An empty hope that feeds us with the wind.

Then you shall know how great man's foolishness  
And his delusion are, when he's content  
To choose a child for lord ; for guide, the blind.

## ONE ONLY AIM AND THOUGHT

**W**HEN Nature formed Cassandra, who should  
move

*The hardest hearts with love's soft passionings,  
She made her of a thousand beauteous things  
That she had hoarded like a treasure-trove*

*For centuries. And Love too interwove  
All He was dearly nesting neath His wings  
Of gentle, to make honey-sweet the stings  
Of her fair eyes, that even the Gods must love.*

*And when from Heaven she was newly come  
And first I saw her, my poor heart, struck dumb,  
Was lost in love ; and love, her minister,*

*So poured her charm into my very veins  
That now I have no pleasure but my pains,  
No aim or knowledge but the thought of her.*

## LOVE'S CHARMING

**M**AID of fifteen, in childlike beauty dight,  
Fair head with crinkled ringlets golden-  
tressed,  
Rose-petalled forehead, cheeks like amethyst,  
Laughter that lifts the soul to Heaven's delight ;

And neck like snow, and throat than milk more  
white,  
And heart full-blossomed neath a budding  
breast —  
Beauty divine in human form expressed,  
And virtue worthy of that beauty bright —

An eye whose light can change the night to day,  
A gentle hand that smooths away my care,  
Yet holds my life caught in its fingers' snare ;

Withal a voice that's ever fain to sing,  
Still stopped by smiles, or sweet sighs languish-  
ing —  
These are the spells that charmed my wits away.

## *A PICTURE AND A PLEA*

**S***OMETIMES, your head a little downward bent,  
I see you play at gossip with your thought,  
Sitting apart, alone, as though you sought  
To shun the world and live in banishment.*

*Then oft I would approach, in dear intent  
To greet you — but my voice, straightway dis-  
traught  
With panic fear, behind my lips is caught,  
And silence leaves me standing shamed and shent.*

*Mine eyes do fear to meet the beams of thine,  
My soul doth tremble neath those rays divine,  
Nor tongue nor voice can to its function move.*

*Only my sighs, only my tear-stained face  
Must do their office, speaking in their place,  
And bear sufficing witness of my love.*

## LOVE'S PERFECT POWER

SUN of my earthly worship, I declare  
She equals him in Heaven ! He with his eye  
Makes glad, makes warm, makes light the  
spacious sky ;  
She gladdens earth with beauty yet more rare.

Nature and art, earth, water, fire, and air,  
The stars, the Graces, and the Gods on high  
Combine in rivalry to beautify  
My Lady, and to make her wondrous fair.

Thrice happy were I, had not Fate's disdain  
Walled in with adamant magnet-stone  
So chaste a heart behind so fair a face !

And happiest, had I not filled every vein  
With fire and ice — because my heart is gone  
And love beats, burns, and freezes in its place.

## EVEN UNTO DEATH

**T**o think one thought a hundred hundred ways,  
Neath two loved eyes to lay your heart quite  
bare,  
To drink the bitter liquor of despair  
And eat forever ashes of lost days —

In spirit and flesh to know youth's bloom decays,  
To die of pain, yet swear no pain is there,  
The more you sue, to move the less your fair,  
Yet make her wish, the law your life obeys —

Anger that passes, faith that cannot move ;  
Far dearer than yourself your foe to love ;  
To build a thousand vain imaginings,

To long to plead, yet fear to voice a breath,  
In ruin of all hope to hope all things —  
These are the signs of love — love even to death.

## LOVE'S WOUNDING

**A**s the young stag, when lusty Spring supreme  
O'er Winter's biting cold at last prevails,  
To crop the honeyed leafage seeks new trails  
And leaves his dear retreat at dawn's first gleam ;

Alone, secure, afar (as he may deem)  
From bay of hounds, or hunters' echoing hails,  
Now on the mountain-slopes, now in the vales,  
Now by the waters of a secret stream,

He wantons freely, at his own sweet will,  
Knowing no fear of net or bow, until,  
Pierced with one dart, he lies dead in his pride —

Even so I wandered, with no thought of woe,  
In my life's April — when one quick-drawn bow  
Planted a thousand arrows in my side.

## LOVE'S SUBMISSION

**W**HAT though it please you light my heart with  
fire

*(Heart that is yours, your subject, your domain),  
With fire of Furies, not with Love's sweet pain,  
To waste me body and bone till life expire !*

*The ill that others deem too cruel-dire  
Is sweet to me — I will not once complain,  
For I love not my life, nor hold it fain  
Save as to love it pleases your desire.*

*But yet, if Heaven hath made me, Lady mine,  
To be your victim, may it not suffice  
To lay my loyal service at your shrine ?*

*'T were better you should have my service meet  
Than horror of a human sacrifice  
Stricken and bleeding at your beauty's feet.*

## CASSANDRA'S PROPHECY

"**T**IME's frost shall touch thy temples in the morn,  
Ere evening comes thy day shall ended be,  
Cheated of hope thy thoughts shall die with thee,  
Near ways shall lead thee to thy farthest bourn.

"Thy songs, that move me not, shall wither, shorn  
Of youth's fresh bloom ; and when for love of me  
Thy death has proved my fated mastery,  
Posterity shall laugh thy sighs to scorn.

"Thy fame shall be a by-word in the land,  
Thy work prove built on quickly-shifting sand,  
Thy pictures vainly painted in the skies."

So prophesied the Nymph I dote upon ;  
When Heaven for witness to her malison  
With lightning from the right struck blind mine  
eyes.

## LOVE'S ATTRIBUTES

**C**ERES rules the fields of grain,  
Goat-foot Gods the wood;  
Phœbus gives the laurel-vine,  
Pallas the olives good,  
And Chloris guards the tender grass in bud;  
To Cybel's reign  
Belongs the fair lone pine.

All sweet fruits that orchards bear  
Own Pomona's power;  
All sweet sounds that stir the grove  
Are the Zephyrs' dower;  
Nymphs rule the waves, and Flora every flower;  
But tears and care  
Are consecrate to Love.

## A PROPER ROUNDELAY

SEE thou, my joy, my care,  
How many a wondrous thing  
In me thou art perfecting  
Through beauties beyond compare :

So utterly thine eyes,  
Thy laughter and thy grace,  
Thy brow, thy hair, thy face  
Fashioned in angel's guise,

Do burn me, since the day  
When first I knew thereof,  
Longing with passion of love  
To win them in love's sweet way,

That but for the saving tears  
My life is bedewed withal,  
Long since beyond recall  
'T were wasted by heat that sears.

And yet thy beauteous eyes,  
Thy laughter and thy grace,  
Thy brow, thy hair, thy face  
Fashioned in angel's guise,

*So freeze me, since the day  
When first I knew thereof,  
Longing with passion of love  
To win them in love's sweet way,*

*That but for the saving heat  
My soul is enflamed withal,  
Long since beyond recall  
'T were wasted through eyes that greet.*

*See then, my joy, my care,  
How many a wondrous thing  
In me thou art perfecting  
Through beauty beyond compare.*

## LOVE-JOY, LOVE-SORROW

**A** THOUSAND lilies, a thousand pinks,  
I take in my arms and clasp them round  
Close as the loving vine-branch links  
The bough in its clinging tendrils wound.

For joy has taken abode with me,  
And care no longer turns pale my face,  
I love all life — and if these things be,  
'T is the gift, fair dream, of thy heaven-sent  
grace.

I could climb the sky thy flight to follow . . .  
But alas ! my joy lives but a breath,  
For the fleeting dream is a vision hollow,  
Like clouds in the wind it vanisheth.

## LOVE'S COMPARINGS

**C**ARNATIONS *and lilies are hueless*  
*When set by the face of my fair,*  
*And fine-woven gold is but worthless*  
*If weighed with the wealth of her hair ;*  
*Through arches of coral passes*  
*Her laughter that banisheth care,*  
*And flowers spring fresh mongst the grasses*  
*Wherever her feet may fare.*

## THE WAYS OF LOVE

**L**OVE's infidel  
Whom I adore,  
You know too well  
That I love you more  
By a hundred score  
Than mine eyes or heart !  
So you'd die before  
You'd be called "sweet-heart !"

But if I could seem  
To set no store  
By your esteem,  
Then you'd love me more  
By a hundred score  
Than your eyes or heart,  
And almost implore  
To be called "sweet-heart !"

" 'Tis the way of love  
That who loves the best  
The least can he move  
His Lady's breast." . . .  
Ah, would I could test  
The proverb's truth  
And hate — in jest —  
Till you loved in sooth !

## MADRIGAL

TAKE my heart, Lady, take my heart —  
Take it, for it is yours, my sweet,  
So yours it is, that 't were not meet  
Another shared its slightest part.

So, yours, if yours it pine and die,  
Then yours, all yours, shall be the blame,  
And there below, your soul in shame  
Shall rue such bitter cruelty.

Were you a savage Scythian's child,  
Yet love, that turns the tigers mild,  
Would melt you at my sighing.

But you, more cruel-fierce than they,  
Have set your will my heart to slay,  
And live but through my dying.

## TO THE BEES

**O**H whither, honey-bees,  
Oh whither fly you,  
Seeking o'er bloomy leas  
Food to supply you?  
If you would feast on flowers divine,  
No longer range without design  
But hither hie you.

Come seek Cassandra's lips  
Warm with my kisses —  
Your honey-comb that drips  
Less sweet than this is.  
Here roses blow, and blood-red bowers  
Of Hyacinth's and Ajax' flowers  
Breathe perfumed blisses.

Sweet marjoram all Winter through,  
And arum fragrant,  
Wait not Spring's leave to bloom anew  
That March and May grant,  
But match the laurel, ever young,  
While anise blossoms ever among  
The woodbine vagrant.

*But sheathe your stings, in care  
Her lips to cherish.  
She too can sting, beware ! . . .  
And where there flourish  
A thousand flowers, leave some for mine  
To bear the manna and the wine  
My life that nourish.*

*“ LOVE ME, LOVE ME NOT ”*

**T**HE better you know of my true love's throe,  
The more you fly me,  
My cruel one ;  
The more I woo you, the more pursue you,  
The more you defy me,  
The less are won.

Then shall I leave you? Though 't would not grieve  
you,  
Alas ! believe me  
I'm not so brave !  
Yet I'll bless the hour of Death's full power  
If you'll receive me  
To die your slave.

## THE MOURNING DOVE

“**W**HAT art thou saying, doing, pensive dove,  
Upon that withered tree ?” “*Ab, friend,  
I moan.*”

“*Why moanest thou ?*” “*Because my mate is  
gone,  
Dearer than life.*” “*Why left she this fair  
grove ?*”

“*A fowler, through the cruel craft he wove,  
Limed her and slew, since when I mourn alone  
And chide harsh Death that took my cherished  
one  
Yet would not slay me with her, my true love.*”

“*And art thou fain to die and join thy mate ?*”  
“*Do I not languish in this darksome wood  
Forever by regret of her pursued ?*”

“*O gentle birdlings, happy is your fate !  
Nature herself in love hath nurtured you  
To die or live unchanging lovers true.*”

## LOVE'S QUICKENING

**E**RE Love from barren Chaos drew the skies,  
Piercing its womb that hid the light of day,  
Beneath primæval earth's and water's sway  
The shapeless Heavens lay whelmed, in dark disguise.

Even so my sluggish soul, too dull to rise,  
Within this body's gross and heavy clay  
Without or form or feature shapeless lay  
Until Love's arrow pierced it from your eyes.

Love brought me life and power and truth and light,  
Made pure my inmost heart through his control,  
And shaped my being to a perfect whole.

He warms my veins, he lights my thought, his flight  
Snatches me upward, till in Heaven's height  
I find the ordered pathway of my soul.

## LOVE'S HEALING

**M**<sup>y</sup> chosen one — you to whom I have said,  
“You and you only ever please my heart” —  
I look deep in your eyes, and heal the smart  
That long love-yearning hath engendered.

*My hunger grows the more through being fed;  
But Love, who wasteth not his perfect art  
On the unworthy, with each deeper dart  
Brings not the pain I thought, but joy instead,*

*And healeth from my heart all pain away.  
Love is not pain but gain. Though bitter-sweet,  
Less bitter 't is than sweet, less ill than good.*

*Twice happy then, yea, thrice, though Love me slay,  
If but below I may Tibullus meet  
And wander there beside him in Love's wood.*

## LOVE THE TEACHER AND INSPIRER

**I** DRAGGED my life along with sullen sighs  
In heaviness of body and of soul,  
Knowing not yet the Muse's high control  
And honor that she brings her votaries,

Until the hour I loved you. Then your eyes  
Became my guide to lead to virtue's goal,  
Where I might win that knowledge fair and  
whole  
Which by true loving makes men nobly wise.

O love, my all, if aught of good I do,  
If worthily of your dear eyes I write,  
You are the cause, yours is the potency.

My perfect grace comes ever but from you,  
You are my spirit ! If I work aright,  
'T is you that do it, you that work in me.

## IN ABSENCE

**W**IDE-STRETCHING *plains, and mountain-peaks*  
*far-seen,*

*Sky, air, and winds — and little ripply waves*  
*Of springs, and winding banks the slow stream*  
*laves,*

*Tall forests dark, and low-cut coppice green,*

*Groves, vine-clad hills, and bloomy vales between,*  
*Buds, flowers, dew-laden grass, deep mossy*  
*caves —*

*All you that heard my songs' low sweet sad*  
*staves —*

*Waters of Loir, woods of my loved Gastine,*

*Since grief of parting wrung me with such pains*  
*I could not say "Farewell" to her, alas !*  
*Whose I am, near or far, where'er I dwell,*

*I beg of you, sky, air, winds, mountains, plains,*  
*Woods, coppice, river-banks, caves, springs,*  
*flowers, grass,*  
*Hills, valleys, groves, say for me, "Fare thee*  
*well."*

## LOVE'S SOLICITUDE

**W**HERE art thou at this moment, love? — what  
doing,

*What saying, thinking? — Dost thou think of  
me?*

*Hast thou no care for my hard agony,  
Though care for thee still boundeth me, renewing*

*My pain, and all my heart with love subduing? —*

*Absent, I hear thee speak, and speak to thee.*

*Thy form so present in my mind I see,*

*No thought can harbor there of other wooing.*

*I hold thine eyes, thy beauty, and thy grace*

*Engraven on my heart — and every place*

*Where e'er I saw thee dance, laugh, speak, or  
move.*

*I hold thee mine, though I am not mine own;*

*I live and breathe in thee, in thee alone,*

*Light of mine eyes, blood of my veins, my love.*

## ABSENCE IN SPRING

**W**HAT boots it me to see this verdure fair  
That laughs along the fields — to hear the  
call  
Of birdlings, and the purling waterfall,  
And Spring-time winds that woo the murmurous  
air,

When she that woundeth me, yet hath no care  
Of how my pains increase, comes not at all  
And hides the brightness of her eyes withal,  
Twin stars, that fed my heart with heavenly fare.

I had far rather keep old Winter's cold ;  
For Winter doth less aptly aid Love's charms  
Than Spring-time months, that are Love's Sum-  
moners

Yet make me hate myself, who cannot hold  
In this fair month of April in my arms  
Her who doth hold my life and death in hers.

## THE THOUGHT OF DEATH

**S**INCE *when her faithful eyes, to which I yield  
Utter allegiance, no more bring me light,  
Darkness is day to me, and day is night —  
Such power upon me doth her absence wield.*

*My bed is grown a fierce-fought battle-field.  
Nothing can please me, all things work me spite.  
One thought that puts all other thoughts to flight  
Clutches my heart and tears its wounds unhealed.*

*Beside the Loir, where countless flowers spring,  
Sated with sorrows, longings, bootless cries,  
I should have set an end to all my pain,*

*Save that some God doth ever turn mine eyes  
Toward that far country of her sojourning,  
Whose thought brings comfort to my heart again.*

## REMEMBERED SCENES

**T**HIS is the wood my holy angel-child  
Made joyous with her song, that day in  
Spring ;  
These are the flowers her touch was gladdening  
While here she dreamed apart, and dreaming  
smiled,;

This is the little woodland meadow wild  
Whose green young life seemed neath her feet to  
spring  
As step by step she wandered, pillaging  
Flowers sweet as she was, fresh and undefiled.

This is the spot where first I saw her smile  
With eyes that rapt my soul away the while ;  
Here I have seen her weep, there heard her sing,

'T was here I saw her dance, there sit aloof. . . .  
Of such vague thoughts, with shuttle wandering,  
Love weaves my web of life, both warp and woof.

## THE MUSES' COMFORTING

**M** ESEEMS *I scarce could live, but for the Muse,  
My faithful mate who follows here and  
there  
O'er hills, fields, woods ; and charms away my  
care  
With beauteous gifts, and all my woe subdues.*

*If I am sad, I know no other ruse  
To conquer grief, but call my comrade rare,  
My Clio ; straight she comes, and greets me fair  
And graciously, nor ever makes excuse.*

*Would the nine Sisters might each season please  
To make my house with their fair gifts replete,  
Which rust can never spoil, nor frost, nor fire !*

*Thyme blossoms not so sweet for honey-bees  
As their fair gifts upon my mouth are sweet,  
On which high minds may feed and never tire.*

## THE POET'S GIFT

**T**HAT century to century may tell  
The perfect love Ronsard once bore to you,  
How he was reason-reft for love of you  
And thought it freedom in your chains to dwell ;

That age on age posterity full well  
May know my veins were filled with beauty of  
you  
And that my heart's one wish was only you,  
I bring for gift to you this immortelle.

Long will it live in freshness of its prime.  
And you shall live, through me, long after  
death —  
So can the well-skilled lover conquer Time,

Who loving you all virtue followeth.  
Like Laura, you shall live the cynosure  
Of earth, so long as pens and books endure.



*LIFE, JOY, AND SONG*



## TO HIS VALET

**I** WANT three days to read the *Iliad* through !  
So, Corydon, close fast my chamber door.  
If anything should bother me before  
I've done, I swear you 'll have somewhat to rue !

No ! not the servant, nor your mate, nor you  
Shall come to make the bed or clean the floor.  
I must have three good quiet days — or four.  
Then I 'll make merry for a week or two.

Ah ! but — if any one should come from HER,  
Admit him quickly ! Be no loiterer,  
But come and make me brave for his receiving.

But no one else ! — not friends or nearest kin !  
Though an Olympian God should seek me, leaving  
His Heaven, shut fast the door ! Don't let him  
in !

## SUMMER'S REVEL

**O**H! but my mind is weary!  
Long I have conned the dreary  
Tomes of Aratus.  
Surely 't is time to play now!  
Ho! to the fields away now!  
Shall we not live to-day now?  
What though dull fools berate us!

What is the use of learning,  
When it but brings new yearning  
Problems to tease us?  
When, or at eve or morning,  
Soon, but without a warning,  
Pleadings and pity scorning,  
Orcus the dark shall seize us.

Corydon, lead the way, and  
Find where good wine's to pay, and  
Cool me a flagon!  
Then in vine-trellised bowers,  
Bedded on thick-strewn flowers,  
Hours upon idle hours  
Sweetly shall haste or lag on.

*Buy me no meat, but mellow  
Apricots, melons yellow,  
    Cream, and strawberries.  
These have the sweetest savor  
Eaten in forest cave, or  
Lying by brooks that rave or  
    Streamlet that singing tarries.*

*Now in my youth's fresh buoyance  
Laughter shall wait on joyance,  
    Wine shall flow fast now ;  
Lest, when my life grows colder,  
Sickness, by age made bolder,  
Say, as he taps my shoulder :  
    " Come, friend — you 've drunk your last  
    now."*

## TO THE HAWTHORN-TREE

**H**AWTHORN fair, whose burgeoning  
    Blossoms spring  
Where these banks wind beauteously,  
Down along thine arms there clings,  
    Waves, and swings,  
Trailing wild-vine drapery.

Rival camps of scurrying ants  
    Have their haunts  
Fortified, at thy roots' head.  
In thy hollow-eaten bole's  
    Countless holes  
Tiny bees find board and bed.

Nightingale the chorister  
    Dwelleth here  
Where in flush of youth he made  
Love, and still each year again  
    Shall obtain  
Solace in thy leafy shade.

*In thy top he bath his nest  
Built, and dressed —  
Woven of wool, with silks made gay ;  
Whence his young so soon as hatched,  
Must be snatched,  
For my hands a gentle prey.*

*Live, then, dainty hawthorn fair,  
Live fore'er,  
Live secure from every foe !  
May nor axe nor lightning harm ;  
Wind, nor storm,  
E'er avail to lay thee low.*

## NEW APRIL

**G**OD guard you, and greet you well,  
*Messengers of Spring :*  
*Nightingale and cuckoo,*  
*Turtle-dove and hoopoe,*  
*Swallow swift, and all wild birds*  
*That with a hundred varied words*  
*Rouse and make to ring*  
*Every greening glade and fell.*

*God guard you, and greet you fain,*  
*Dainty flowerets, too :*  
*Daisies, lilies, roses,*  
*Poppies — and the posies*  
*Sprung where ancient heroes fell,*  
*Hyacinth and asphodel —*  
*Mint and thyme and rue :*  
*All be welcome back again !*

*God guard you, and greet you true,*  
*Butterflies and bees,*  
*In your motley dresses*  
*Wooing the sweet grasses,*  
*Flitting free on rainbow-wing,*  
*Coaxing, kissing, cozening*  
*Flowers of all degrees,*  
*Red or yellow, white or blue.*

*A thousand thousand times I greet  
Thy return again,  
Sweet and beauteous season ;  
In sooth I love with reason  
Better far thy sunny gleams  
And thy gently prattling streams  
Than Winter's wind and rain  
That shut me close in my retreat.*

## THE COURTIER'S RETURN

**G**OOD morn, my heart, good morn, my life's one end,  
Good morn, light of mine eyes, my joy, my  
sorrow,  
Good morn, I bring you greeting,  
My pet, my pretty sweetening,  
My fairest fair, my love —  
My fresh-blown flower sweet, my sweetest friend,  
My Spring-time sweet, my nestling, my sweet  
dove,  
My turtle-dove, my sparrow,  
My rebel sweet, good-morrow !

Good-morrow, love — and may I sooner die  
Than e'er again my faithlessness renew, love,  
Leaving my lover's pleasure  
For sake of fame and treasure  
To follow court and king.  
Nay, perish riches, honor, loyalty !  
I will not leave my love for anything,  
Or part again from you, love,  
My goddess sweet, my true-love.

*“MARIE, ARISE!”*

**M**ARIE, arise, my indolent sweet saint !  
Long since the skylark sang his morning  
stave,  
Long since the nightingale, love's gentle slave,  
Carolled upon the thorn his love-complaint.

*Arise ! come see the tender grass besprent  
With dew-pearls, and your rose with blossoms  
brave.  
Come see the dainty pinks to which you gave  
Last eve their water with a care so quaint.*

*Last eve you swore and pledged your shining eyes  
Sooner than I this morning you would rise,  
But dawn's soft beauty-sleep, with sweet dis-  
guising,*

*Still gently seals those eyes — that now I kiss  
And now again — and now this breast, and  
this,  
A hundred times, to teach you early rising !*

## SPRING LOVE-SONG

**W**HEN the beauteous Spring I see,  
Glad and free,  
Making young the sea and earth,  
Then the light of day above  
And our love  
Seem but newly brought to birth.

When the sky of deeper blue  
Lights anew  
Lands more beautiful and green,  
Love, with witching looks for darts,  
Wars on hearts,  
Winning them for his demesne.

Scattering his arrows dire  
Tipped with fire,  
He doth bring beneath his sway  
Men and birds and beasts for slaves —  
And the waves  
To his power obeisance pay. . . .

*Nature, for Love's triumphing,  
In the Spring  
Thrills my heart at every breath  
By new beauties everywhere  
Which her care  
From my Lady borroweth :*

*When I see the woodland bowers  
Bright with flowers,  
And the banks with flowers bedight,  
Then methinks I see the grace  
Of her face  
Fair with blended red and white ;*

*When I see elm-branches bound  
Close around  
Where the loving ivies wind,  
Then I feel encompassing  
Arms that cling  
Fast about my neck entwined ;*

*When I hear thee in the vale,  
Nightingale,  
Uttering thy sweetest voice,  
Then methinks her voice I hear,  
Low and clear,  
Making all my soul rejoice ;*

*When the soft wind comes anon  
Murmuring on  
Through the many-branched grove,  
Then I hear the murmured word  
That I heard  
Once alone beside my love ;*

*When I see a new-blown flower's  
Earliest hours  
By the morning sun caressed,  
Then its beauty I compare  
To the rare  
Budding beauty of her breast ;*

*When the sun in Orient skies  
'Gins to rise,  
Flaunting free his yellow hair,  
Then methinks my sweet I see  
Fronting me,  
Binding up her tresses fair ;*

*When I see the meadows studded  
With new-budded  
Flowers that overflow the earth,  
Then my senses half believe  
They receive  
Honeyed fragrance from her breath.*

*So it proveth, howsoe'er  
I compare  
Spring-time with my chosen one.  
Spring gives life to every flower —  
Life and power  
Come to me from her alone.*

*Would't were mine, where streamlets flow  
Whispering low,  
To unbind that wealth of hair,  
Then to wind as many a curl  
As there purl  
Running rippling wavelets there.*

*Would't were mine to be the god  
Of this wood,  
So to seize and hold my love,  
Kissing her as oft again  
As there ben  
Greening leaves in all the grove. . . .*

*Ah, my sweet, my martyrdom,  
Hither come,  
See the flowers how they fare.  
They to pity me are fain —  
Of my pain  
Thou alone hast not a care.*

*See the gentle mating dove  
And his love,  
How they win the joy we seek,  
How they love as Nature bade  
Unafraid,  
How they kiss with wings and beak,*

*While we, following honor's shade,  
Have betrayed  
Joy, through fear and coward shame.  
Ah! the birds are happier far  
Than we are,  
Loving without let or blame.*

*Time is hasting to destroy  
All our joy,  
Snatching it with harpy claws.  
Sweetheart, let us live and love  
Like the dove,  
Heeding not men's rigorous laws.*

*Kiss me, ere the moment slips,  
On my lips,  
O my love, and yet again  
Kiss me, ere our youth's brief day  
Fleet away,  
Making all our passion vain.*

## GATHER ROSE-BUDS

**W**HILE this green month is fleeting,  
Oh ! come, my pretty sweeting,  
Waste not in vain thy ring-time !  
Sly age, ere we've an inkling  
Thereof, our hair is sprinkling —  
He passeth even as Spring-time.

Then, while our life is crying  
For love, and Time is flying,  
Come, love, come reap desire.  
Pass love from vein to vein !  
Swift comes old Death — and then  
All joys expire.

*CARPE DIEM*

**T**HERE is a time for all things, sweet!  
    *When we at church are kneeling*  
    *We'll worship truly.*  
*But when in secret lovers meet,*  
    *Their wanton blisses stealing,*  
    *We'll match them duly.*

*Why, then, oh why deny my will*  
    *To kiss thy hair's soft beauty,*  
    *Thy lips' dear roses?*  
*When I would touch thy breast, why still*  
    *Dost feign the nun's cold duty*  
    *In cloister-closes?*

*For whom dost save thine eyes in sooth,*  
    *Thy brow, thy bosom's sweetness,*  
    *Thy lips twin-mated?*  
*Dost think to kiss King Pluto's mouth*  
    *When Charon's hateful fleetness*  
    *Oars thee ill-fated?*

*Thine aspect shall be gaunt and dread,  
Thy lips, when Death has ta'en thee,  
All sicklied over.*

*Were I to meet thee mongst the dead  
I'd pass by, and disdain thee,  
Thee, once my lover !*

*Thy skull shall know nor hair nor skin,  
Thy jowl the worms shall fatten,  
Erstwhile so winning ;  
Thou'lt have no other teeth within  
Thy jaws, but such as batten  
In death's-heads grinning. . . .*

*Sweet, while we live, oh ! seize to-day,  
And every respite using,  
Spare not thy kisses !  
Soon, soon, Death comes, and then for aye  
Thou'lt rue thy cold refusing  
And mourn lost blisses.*

## LOVE'S LESSON

**T**HE moon each month is blenched  
Brighter to rise ;  
But once life's light is quenched,  
Then shall our eyes  
Long sleep be taking,  
With no awaking.

Then kiss me, while we live  
Above the ground !  
A thousand kisses give —  
Love knows no bound.  
To His divinity  
Belongs infinity.

## TO THE SKYLARK

**S**KYLARK, how I envy you  
Your gentle pleasures ever new,  
Warbling at the break of day  
Of love, sweet love, sweet love alway,  
And shaking free your beating wings  
Of dew that to each feather clings !

Ere Apollo risen hath  
You lift your body from its bath,  
Darting up with little leaps  
To dry it where the cloud-flock sleeps,  
Fluttering free each tiny wing  
And "tirra-lirra" carolling  
Sweet, so sweet, that every swain,  
Knowing Spring has come again,  
Thinketh on his love anew  
And longs to be a bird like you.

Then, when you have scaled the sky,  
You drop — as swift, as suddenly,  
As the spool a maid lets fall  
When, caught at eve in slumber's thrall,  
Distaff forgot, she nods so much  
Her cheek and bosom almost touch ;

*Or as by day when she doth spin  
And he that seeks her love to win  
Cometh near her unbeknown —  
Abashed she casts her glances down,  
And quick the slender thin-wound spool  
From her hand afar doth roll. . . .  
So you drop, my lark, my lover,  
Dainty minion, darling rover,  
Lark I love more tenderly  
Than all the other birds that fly,  
More than even the nightingale  
Whose notes through copse and grove prevail.*

*Innocent of every harm,  
You never rob the toilsome farm  
Like those birds that steal the wheat  
And spoil the harvest — thieves that eat  
Growing grain in stalk and leaf  
Or shell it from the standing sheaf.  
Greening furrows are your haunts,  
Where the little worms and ants,  
Or the flies and grubs, you seek,  
To fill your children's straining beak,  
While they wait, with wings ungrown,  
Clothed in clinging golden down.*

*Wrongly have the poets told  
That you, the larks, in days of old  
Dared your father to betray  
And cut his royal locks away  
Wherein his fated power lay.  
Out ! alas ! not you alone  
The wrongs of poets' tongues have known.  
Hear the nightingale complain  
And from her bower their tales arraign.  
Swallows sing the self-same plea  
The while they chirp "cossi, cossi."  
None the less, then, I entreat,  
Your "tirra-lirra" still repeat —  
Make them burst with very spite,  
These poets, for the lies they write !*

*None the less, for what they say,  
Live ye joyously away !  
Seek at each return of Spring  
Your long-accustomed pleasuring.  
Never may the pilfering raid  
Of quaintly dainty shepherd-maid  
Toward your furrows turn her quest  
To spy your new-born cheeping nest  
And steal it in her gown away  
The while you sing in Heaven your lay.*

*Live, then, birdlings, live fore'er,  
And lift aloft through highest air  
Warbled song and soaring wing  
To herald each return of Spring.*

## WINE AND DEATH

**O**N tender grass, neath a laurel-tree,  
Who listeth to lie and drink with me?  
Boy-Cupid shall come, and girding up  
His light-blown robe with a hempen string  
Or flax to his naked loins, shall bring  
The wine, and bear my cup.

The life of man is a fleeting breath,  
From day to day it evanisheth  
Like breaking waves that roll to the shore.  
Death's hour comes on . . . and our tomb shall keep  
Nothing of us, save a nameless heap  
Of little bones — no more.

I care not for custom, that bids perfume  
With spices and balm my new-made tomb  
And pour sweet odors, and incense shed.  
But while I'm living, it is my will  
To bathe in fragrance, and drink my fill,  
And crown with flowers my head.

*I'll name myself for my heir, I vow,  
And spend the heritage here and now !  
Who lives for others seeks foolish cares.  
Mad is the pelican, pouring free  
His blood for his children. Mad is he  
Who saves his goods for his heirs !*

## NATURE'S DRINKING-SONG

**T**HE earth drinks rain through every pore,  
Through every root the tree,  
The sea drinks rivers evermore,  
The sun drinks up the sea,

The moon drinks up the sun his light,  
All things in nature drink.  
Since drinking is the common right  
Come let us drink, drink, drink !

## COMRADE SONG

**W**E hold not in our power  
The coming morrows' time;  
Life has no certain dower.  
Kings' favors we desire,  
And waiting them, expire  
Ere hope has passed its prime.

The man whom Death has ta'en  
Eats not, and drinks no more,  
Though barns be full of grain  
And vaults have wine in store  
On Earth, that he has bought.  
They reach not even his thought.

Then what shall care bestead?  
Go, Corydon, prepare  
A couch with roses spread;  
To banish care and care  
I'll lie outstretched for hours  
Mid pots and heaped-up flowers.

*And bring D' Aurat to me  
And all that company  
The Muses love so well,  
Forgetting not Jodelle.  
From eve to morn we'll feast  
With fivescore cups at least !*

*Pour wine, and pour again !  
In this great goblet golden  
I'll drink to Estienne  
Who saved from Lethe's treasures  
The sweet, sweet Teian measures  
Of that lost singer olden,*

*Anacreon the wine-king,  
To whom the drinker's pleasure  
Is due, and Bacchus' treasure  
His flasks, and Love, and Venus,  
And tipsy old Silenus  
In vine-clad bowers drinking !*

## THE PRAISE OF ROSES

Y **P**OUR we roses into wine !  
In this good wine these roses  
Pour, and quaff the drink divine  
Till sorrow's hold uncloses  
From our hearts, both mine and thine.

S Kings and clowns from diverse ways  
At Charon's boat are meeting.  
None escape their fated days. . . .  
Ah ! friend, while time is fleeting  
Let us sing the rose's praise.

L **R**oses are the chief of all  
The flowers in garden closes,  
Flowers of joy, and therewithal  
Of love — and so the roses  
“ Venus' violets ” I call.

7 **R**oses are Love's own bouquet  
And joyance of the Graces.  
Dawn doth give them pearls alway  
Whose white their red enlaces  
Dipped in dew at break of day.

8  
*Roses are the Gods' delight,  
And maidens' best adorning,  
Maidens deck their bosoms white  
With crimson roses, scorning  
Gold and gems, though ne'er so bright.*

9  
*What is fair without the rose?  
Beauty is born of roses.  
Venus' skin is all one rose,  
Aurora's touch is roses,  
Rising suns have brows of rose.*

11.  
*Be my brows with roses crowned  
In place of laurel's glory.  
Call the twice-born God renowned,  
Our father hale and hoary;  
Spread him roses all around;*

12  
*Bacchus loves the beauty sweet  
Of crimson-petalled roses.  
Roses fill his vine-retreat  
Where care-free he reposes  
Drinking mid the Summer's heat.*



*THE ROSE OF LOVE*



**"SWEET-HEART, COME SEE IF  
THE ROSE"**

**S**WEET-HEART, come see if the rose  
Which at morning began to uncloze  
Its damask gown to the sun  
Has not lost, now the day is done,  
The folds of its damasked gown  
And its colors so like your own.

Ah, see, in how brief a space,  
Sweet-heart, it strewed the place,  
Alas, with its beauties' fall! . . .  
O step-dame Nature! — if all  
Of life you will grant such a flower  
Is from morning to evening hour!

Then hear me and heed, sweet-heart :  
Swiftly the years depart !  
Harvest, oh ! harvest your hour  
While life is a-bloom with youth !  
For age with bitter ruth  
Will fade your beauty's flower.

## LIFE'S ROSES

**W**HEN you are very old, by the hearth's glare,  
At candle-time, spinning and winding  
thread,  
You'll sing my lines, and say, astonished:  
Ronsard made these for me, when I was fair.

Then not a servant even, with toil and care  
Almost out-worn, hearing what you have said,  
Shall fail to start awake and lift her head  
And bless your name with deathless praise fore'er.

My bones shall lie in earth, and my poor ghost  
Take its long rest where Love's dark myrtles  
thrive.

You, crouching by the fire, old, shrunken, grey,

Shall rue your proud disdain and my love lost. . . .  
Nay, hear me, love! — Wait not to-morrow —  
live,  
And pluck life's roses, oh! to-day, to-day.

## LOVE'S TOKEN

**T**O you, my conqueror, this ivy wound  
In wreaths I give — the ivy that alway  
Holds trees and walls close twined in spray on  
spray,  
Tendril on tendril, wrapt, embraced, and bound.

It is your right to be with ivy crowned !  
Would it were mine to wind me, night and day,  
Round you, my column, in the ivy's way,  
And lie along your breast in love's deep swound. . . .

Ah, will the time not come, will it not be —  
When, just as dawn awakes the world to life,  
Neath branches of a bower thick shade encloses,

Under soft skies, at prattling birds' first glee,  
I shall at last be conqueror in love's strife,  
And clasp at will your ivory and roses?

## MESSENGER NIGHTINGALE

NIGHTINGALE, *nightingale,*  
Guest of my bower,  
Pouring o'er hill and dale  
Notes of such power  
None can forget thy tale  
Of sorrow's dower,

Fly to my cruel one,  
Tell her in truth  
That for no orison  
Time will have ruth —  
Quicker than dreams are done  
Passes our youth.

Tell her the fairest rose  
Winter's endeavor  
Withered, shall May uncloze  
Fairer than ever. —  
Life's Spring-time, once it goes,  
Comes again never.

*Once age has come, the grace  
Crowning her brow  
Fades like a garden-space  
Cut by the plough,  
Furrowing deep her face  
Lily-white now.*

*Once age has stealthily  
Wrought out his crime,  
Vainly she'll weep for the  
Flight of swift time,  
Wishing she'd shared with me  
Sweets of her prime.*

*Nightingale, bid her come  
Where love reposes,  
Lying on sweet winsome  
Beds of rich posies,  
Changing her colors from  
Lilies to roses.*

## HELEN'S BEAUTY

**T**HAT Lady, chiefest slave of Love her lord,  
By Jove the Swan begot, and sister born  
To the great Twins, whose beauty's rising morn  
Roused up all Europe gainst the Asian horde,

One day unto her mirror spoke this word,  
Seeing her face of all its graces shorn :  
" With how great madness were my husbands  
torn  
To seek such rotting flesh with royal sword !

" Ah ! Gods, too jealous of our little day !  
Fair women's youth flies once for all away,  
Yet serpents cast their age each Spring, for  
years." . . .

So Helen spoke, and wept lost beauty's dower.  
The story is for you. Pluck your youth's flower !  
When April's gone, October bringeth tears.

## KISSES AND DEATH

**M**Y mistress, kiss me, clasp me, hold me close !  
Thy breath on my breath, warm me till I  
live !

*A thousand kisses take, a thousand give !  
Love loves the infinite, nor limit knows.*

*Kiss me, and kiss me yet again ! Life goes,  
Stealing, fair mouth, thy beauty fugitive,  
And leaving lips no longer sensitive,  
Lips wan and hueless, nothing like to those.*

*Ah, while we live, kiss me with lips of rose,  
And kissing, stammer words that half uncloze  
These clasped close-clinging lips, words broken  
and few.*

*Die in my arms, Death shall our shades unite.  
Or wake to life, and I will live anew.  
Life's day — so brief, alas ! — excels the night.*

## WITH FLOWERS

**I** SEND to you a nosegay that but now  
I chose among the full-blown blossoms gay.  
Had one not gathered them at eve to-day  
The morrow morn had found them fallen low.

Let this ensample speak to you, and show  
That even your beauties, in their flower-array,  
Ere little time must fade and fall away  
And like the flowers in one swift moment go.

Time passes swift, my love, ah ! swift it flies !  
Yet no — Time passes not, but we — we pass,  
And soon shall lie outstretched beneath a stone.

And for this love we talk of — Death replies  
Forever not one word of it, alas ! . . .  
Then love me, while thou'rt fair, ere youth is  
gone !

“IF THIS BE LOVE”

**I***f this be love, my Lady — day and night  
To think, muse, dream, of naught but how to  
please,  
To do naught else but seek to serve your ease,  
And worship you, who work me most despite ;*

*If this be love — in long and lonely flight  
To follow ever joy that ever flees  
And find a desert, watered with pain's lees,  
A place of silence and of lost delight ;*

*If this be love — to live far more in you  
Than in myself ; and when I seek to woo,  
Abashed, to find no word to urge my suit,  
Torn with unequal strife at every breath,  
In feeling strong, in speech irresolute : —*

*If these be love, then madly love I you —  
Love you and know the fated end is death.  
My heart speaks plainly, though my tongue is  
mute.*

✓      *LOVE'S ACCOUNTING*

**S**UNBURNT *Summer less devours,  
Less chill is Winter's bitterness,  
The bowers in Spring have fewer flowers,  
Autumn's grapes are less,*

*There are less fish in all the sea,  
La Beauce hath fewer harvestings,  
You'll see less sands in Brittany,  
And in Auvergne less springs,*

*The night less flaming torches wears,  
The woods, less leaves to watch them through,  
Than bears my heart of pains and cares,  
Love, for love of you.*

## LOVE'S RECORDING

**C**OME, boy, and where the grass is thickest pied,  
With robber hand cut the green season's bloom,  
Then flinging open armfuls strew the room  
With flowers that April bears in her young pride.

Then set my lyre, song's handmaid, by my side —  
For if I may, I'll charm away the gloom  
That like a poison worketh to consume  
My life, through power of beauty undefied.

Then bring me ink and countless papers white —  
White paper shall bear witness to my woe,  
Whereon the record of this love I'll write.

White paper, that endures when diamond stone  
Is worn away, shall bid the ages know  
How for love's sake I suffer and make moan.

## LOVE'S FLOWER

**T**AKE thou this rose, sweet even as thou art,  
Thou rose of roses rarest, loveliest,  
Thou flower of freshest flowers, whose fragrance  
blest  
Enwraps me, ravished from myself apart.

Take thou this rose, and with it take my heart,  
My heart that hath no wings, unto thy breast,  
So constant that its faith stands manifest,  
Though wounded sore with many a cruel dart.

The rose and I are diverse in one thing :  
Each morning's rose at eve lies perishing,  
While countless mornings see my love new-born

But never night shall see its life decay. . . .  
Ah ! would that love, new-blossomed in the  
morn,  
Even as a flower had lasted but a day.

## HER IMMORTALITY

**M**<sup>Y</sup> Lady, had I but the Heaven-sent grace  
Of rhythmic speech to match my great intent,  
This verse of mine should grow more eloquent  
Than his who charmed the ancient rocks of Thrace.

Higher than Horace's or Pindar's place  
I'd hang a wreath for thee, so excellent,  
A book so wrought of noble sentiment,  
That Du Bellay would straightway yield the race !

And even Laura's song-ennobled name,  
With glory by the listening ages crowned,  
Lives in the Tuscan verse less-world-renowned

Than thine, whose praise, for pledge of France's  
fame,  
Should conquer empires, peoples, kings, and Time,  
And outsoar Death itself on wings of rhyme.



*LIFE, SONG, AND DEATH*



## 'TWIXT LOVE AND DEATH

**I** SANG these songs, by *Helen's love made blind,*  
*That fated month that oped my Prince's grave !*  
*Great as his sceptre was, it could not save*  
*CHARLES from the debt we owe to human kind.*

*Death stood on one side. Lord of heart and mind,*  
*Love ruled me from the other side, and drave*  
*Such torment through my veins, no thought I gave*  
*Even to my King — in my own pain confined.*

*Now in my heart two different griefs make one :*  
*My Lady's coldness, and the shortened years*  
*Of him I worshipped for his noble fame.*

*She living and he dead bid tears to run —*  
*He asketh weeping, she must have my tears.*  
*For Love and Death are one thing and the same.*

## COUNSEL FOR KINGS

**B**E, like a noble prince, in love with fame !  
Live glorious days, and win a deathless name  
Achieving deeds that history shall tell,  
Like those of Charles the Great, and Charles  
Martel.

Let not the nobles wrong the Third Estate ;  
Let not the populace displease the great.

Manage thy revenues with canny sense ;  
The Prince who cannot govern his expense,  
And rule his wife, his children, his estate,  
Will surely fail to govern well the state. . . .  
But be more miserly of friends than gold ;  
Kings without friends were wretched from of old. . . .

Never appear in pompous vesturing ;  
Virtue alone can fitly clothe a king.  
Let all thy body shine with virtues bright,  
And not thy raiment with rich pearls bedight. . . .

And, Sire, since no man born may punish kings  
For any wrong, with strict examinings  
Chastise thyself, in fear lest finally  
God's justice, higher than thou, should punish  
thee. . . .

TO MARY STUART, QUEEN OF  
FRANCE

(1560)

ENGLAND and Scotland and the land of France,  
Those girt with ocean, this with mountains  
blue,

When you were born, as ancient gossips do,  
Stood round your cradle royal disputants.

France, Scotland, England, each made haste to ad-  
vance

Her claim, demanding you as her just due,  
The while you favored France, methinks, for you  
Were fain to choose her towns for crown to enhance

Your fair head's beauty. To Jove's throne serene  
They take appeal — and he to each allots  
This just decree, granting each one's demand :

That you should be three months Fair England's  
Queen,

Then for three following months be Queen of  
Scots,

And then be Queen six months of the French  
land.

## REGRET, FOR MARY STUART'S DEPARTURE

**I**F spangled fields should lose their every flower,  
And woods their leaves;  
If heaven should lose the stars that are its dower,  
The sea its waves,  
A palace proud, the glory of its king,  
Its pearl, a ring,  
These would be like to France, that now has lost  
Your beauty bright,  
Her flower, her precious pearl, her glory and boast,  
Her star, her light.

Scotland, I would that thou like Delos free  
Couldst wander far  
Nor e'er behold thy bright Queen from the sea  
Rise like a star;  
Till wearied with pursuit, she seek again  
Her own Touraine.  
Then should my lips o'erflow with songs, my tongue  
Thrill with her praise,  
Till like the swan my sweetest notes were sung  
To end my days.

## THE SAME SUBJECT

(1564)

**W**HEN *that your sail bent to the ocean-swell  
And from our weeping eyes bore you away,  
The self-same sail bore far from France that  
day  
The Muses, who were wont with us to dwell  
While happy Fortune stayed you in our land  
And the French sceptre lay within your  
hand. . . .*

*The Muses weeping left our countryside.  
What should the nine fair comrades sing of more,  
Since you, their beauteous subject and their guide,  
On unreturning ways have left our shore,  
Since you, that gave them power to speak and  
sing,  
Cut short their words and left them sorrowing.*

*Your lips, where Nature set a garden-growth  
Of pinks that sweet Persuasion watereth  
With nectar and with honey ; and your mouth  
Made all of rubies, pearls, and gentle breath —*

*Your starry eyes, two fires that Love controls,  
That make the darkest night like day to shine,  
And pierce men's hearts with flame, and teach  
men's souls  
To know the virtue of their light divine —*

*The alabaster of your brow, the gold  
Of curls whose slightest ringlet might have bound  
A Scythian's heart, and made a warrior bold  
Let fall his sword in battle to the ground —*

*The white of ivory that rounds your breast,  
Your hand, so long and slender, and so pure ;  
Your perfect body, Nature's finished best  
And Heaven's ideal in earth-drawn portrai-  
ture —*

*All these, alas ! are gone. . . . What wonder then  
(Since all the grace that lavish Heaven could  
pour  
Revealing beauty once for all to men,  
Have left fair France) if France can sing no  
more ?  
How should sweet songs to lips of poets come,  
When for your loss the Muses' selves are  
dumb ?*

*All that is beautiful is transient too . . .*

*Lilies and roses live brief days and few.*

*Even so your beauty, brilliant as the sun,*

*In one brief day for France has risen and set ;*

*Bright as the lightning, 't was as quickly gone,*

*And left us only longing and regret.*

FOR MARY STUART, IN CAPTIVITY

(1584)

**T**HOUGH by wide seas and Time we sundered  
are,  
Sweet Queen, the light-flash of that beauteous  
sun,  
Your eyes, whose like the whole world holdeth  
none,  
Ne'er from my heart can wander long or far.

Thou other queen, that under prison bar  
Holdest so rare a queen, bid wrath begone  
And change thy rede. From dawn to evening  
star  
The sun sees not so base an action done !

Peoples, you shame your birth, sluggards at arms !  
Your forbears Roland, Renault, Lancelot,  
Fought with glad hearts for noble ladies' charms,

Warded, and saved them. While you, FRENCH-  
MEN, dare  
Not don your armor ! — nay, have touched it not  
To free from slavery a queen so fair !

IN DEAR VENDOME  
(To Guillaume des Autels, French Poet)

MY des Autels, whose true,  
Pure utterance  
Transforms to gold anew  
The speech of France,

List while I celebrate  
My dear Vendôme.  
O land thrice fortunate,  
The Muses' home,

For thee ungrudging Heaven  
Has emptied free  
The horn of plenty, and given  
All grace to thee.

Two ridges, circling, long,  
With summits bold  
Shut out the South-winds strong,  
The North-winds cold;

On one, my loved Gastine,  
The sacred wood,  
Lifts high its head of green,  
Holy, and proud;

*Along the other's side  
Spring countless vines,  
That almost match the pride  
Of Anjou wines ;*

*In winding meadow-ways  
The Loir soft-flowing  
With its own wavelets plays,  
Nor hastes its going.*

*Though none from distant lands,  
By hope cajoled,  
Come seeking mongst thy sands  
The toilsome gold,*

*Though gems of Orient price  
Hide not in thee  
To tempt man's avarice  
Across the sea,*

*Afric, nor boastful Ind  
Can thee outvie,  
Honored, by Gods more kind,  
With gifts more high.*

*For Justice, fled from earth  
And dispossessed,  
Left thee, to mark thy worth,  
Her footprints blest ;*

*And while no more we see  
The golden age,  
Virtue has chosen thee  
For hermitage.*

*The nymphs, that tune their voice  
To notes of streams  
Have made of thee their choice  
To list high themes,*

*Singing with happy grace  
And sweet accords  
Praise to the Heaven-born race,  
Our Bourbon lords.*

*The Muses, whom I woo,  
Worship, and fear,  
The golden Graces too,  
Inhabit here.*

*Though ever back and forth  
My steps may roam,  
This little plot of earth  
Alone is home.*

*Hence may my fated end,  
When time is full,  
Me into exile send  
Perdurable.*

*And here you'll come to weep  
From lands afar,  
While dust and darkness keep  
Your friend, RONSARD.*

## TO THE WOODSMAN OF GASTINE

**S**TAY, woodsman, stay thy hand awhile, and  
bark —

*It is not trees that thou art laying low !  
Dost thou not see the dripping life-blood flow  
From Nymphs that lived beneath the rigid bark ?  
Unholy murderer of our Goddesses,  
If for some petty theft a varlet hangs,  
What deaths hast thou deserved, what bitter  
pangs,  
What brandings, burnings, tortures, dire distress !*

*O lofty wood, grove-dwelling birds' retreat,  
No more shall stag and doe, with light-foot tread,  
Feed in thy shadow, for thy leafy head  
No more shall break the sun's midsummer heat.  
The loving shepherd on his four-holed flute  
Piping the praises of his fair Janette,  
His mastiff near, his crook beside him set,  
No more shall sing of love, but all be mute.  
Silence shall fall where Echo spoke of yore,  
And where soft-waving lay uncertain shade,  
Coulter and plough shall pass with cutting blade  
And frightened Pans and Satyrs come no more.*

*Farewell, thou ancient forest, Zephyr's toy !  
Where first I taught my seven-tongued lyre to  
sing,  
Where first I heard Apollo's arrows ring  
Against my heart, and strike it through with  
joy ;  
Where first I worshipped fair Calliope  
And loved her noble company of nine  
Who showered their roses on this brow of mine ;  
Where with her milk Euterpe nurtured me.*

*Farewell, ye ancient oaks, ye sacred heads,  
With images and flower-gifts worshipped erst,  
But now the scorn of passers-by athirst,  
Who, parched with heat the gleaming ether sheds,  
And robbed of your cool verdure at their need,  
Accuse your murderers, and speak them  
scathe. . . .*

*Farewell, ye oaks, the valiant patriot's wreath,  
Ye trees of Jove himself, Dodona's seed.*

*'T was you, great oaks, that gave their earliest  
food  
To men, ungrateful and degenerate race,  
Forgetful of your favors, recreant, base,  
And quick to shed their foster-fathers' blood !*

*Wretched is he who sets his trust upon  
The world! — how truly speaks philosophy,  
Saying that each thing in the end must die,  
Must change its form and take another on.*

*Fair Tempé's vale shall be in hills uptossed,  
And Athos' peak become a level plain;  
Old Neptune's fields shall some day wave with  
grain.  
Matter abides forever, form is lost.*

## THE POWER OF SONG

**C**OLUMNS *uplifted high,*  
Or *living bronze,*  
Or *stone carved skilfully,*  
Fame's *clarions —*

*Never to men can give*  
*Their deathless meed*  
*Like song that makes to live*  
*Each noble deed.*

*If poets had not come*  
*To grace their name,*  
*Virtue herself were dumb*  
*And tongueless Fame,*

*And dead the memory*  
*Of Hector's worth.*  
*But winged with song they fly*  
*Throughout the earth.*

## THE POET'S TITLES

**H**OLY *Euterpe teaches me to hate  
The common crowd ;  
Her sacred laurel-branch marks my estate,  
And makes me proud.*

*She deigns to tune her fluting pipes for me  
Within her wood,  
And brings them me whene'er my heart may be  
In singing mood.*

*From her own spring she chrismed me, with her lip  
She named my name,  
And made me share old Rome's high mastership  
And Athens' fame.*

## LAUREL'S WORTH

(Dialogue of Ronsard and the Muses)

Ronsard

**M**Y too great love of you hath been my bale,  
O Muses — who defy Time's power, you  
say! —

For now mine eyes are dull, my face is pale,  
My head at thirty years is bald and grey.

The Muses

The wandering seaman weareth bronzed looks  
For beauty; smooth, soft skin doth not avail  
To make the soldier fair; who o'er our books  
Doth bend is ugly save his face be pale.

Ronsard

But what reward for so long following  
With laurelled brow your dances night and day  
Can e'er make good the loss of my life's Spring  
When youth like scattered dust is blown away?

The Muses

Living you shall enjoy a glorious fame,  
And after death your memory shall bloom;  
Age upon age shall keep alive your name,  
Naught but your flesh shall perish in the tomb.

Ronsard

*O gracious recompense ! What vantage hath  
Homer, who lies, mere nothing, underground,  
Without or feet or head or limbs or breath,  
Though on the earth his name be still renowned !*

*The Muses*

*You are deceived. What though the body rot  
Within the tomb ? — it cannot know or care.  
But on the soul of man such change comes not.  
Immortal, freed of flesh, it lives fore'er.*

Ronsard

*Then it is well ! I'll toil with joyous face  
Even though I die o'er-vanquished in the strife  
Of study — to the end no future race  
May lay on me the blame of wasted life.*

*The Muses*

*'T is wisely spoken. They whose fantasy  
Toward God is true and reverent, as of old,  
Shall still create some noble poesy,  
And on their fame the Fates shall have no hold.*

## LIFE-PHILOSOPHY

**C**ALMLY to wait whatever Chance may give  
By Fate's decree  
Alone brings happiness, and makes man live  
Fearless and free.

The things of this world, owning Time's control,  
Move neath His sway ;  
But Time is swift, and swift the seasons roll  
Briefly away.

Once knowledge dwelt beside the Nile, then passed  
To Greece alone ;  
Then Rome had joy of it, that now at last  
Paris doth own.

Cities and kingdoms perish and make room  
For others new,  
That live awhile in glory of their bloom,  
Then perish too.

So arm thyself in firm Philosophy  
Gainst Fate's control ;  
Be nobly brave, and with her precepts high  
Gird up thy soul.

*Then whatsoever change may meet thine eyes  
Fear not at all,  
Though the abyss should rise and be the skies  
And the skies fall.*

## THE HAPPY LIFE

**W**E'LL purge, my friend, the humors that still  
devour

*Our life — the love of money, the love of power.  
In wisdom let us strive to fashion  
Souls that are free of the heats of passion.*

*We'll drive out care, be deaf to ambition's call,  
And learn to live content with our little all.  
If once the soul win calm of feeling,  
Surely the body will need no healing.*

*But souls oppressed with hunger of worldly gain  
Will grow obscure and darken the reason's reign.  
A little smoke when care doth slacken  
Quickly sufficeth the house to blacken.*

*Great riches won, and riches to win once more,  
Are hoards of care on care in a heaped-up store;  
What end shall serve such toilsome questing,  
Leaving us never the time for resting?*

*From out my fancy's tablets I'll raze all trace  
Of this enticing world with its shameless face,  
To joy of song a free heart bringing  
Oft as the Muses may ask my singing.*

*Be this the only object of my desire.  
No more to worldly gain shall my heart aspire  
Nor vainly be with hope tormented.  
This is my kingdom — to live contented.*

## FAREWELL TO LOVE

ONCE the life that ran in my veins was stronger ;  
Now youth burns my blood with desire no  
longer ;  
Soon my grizzled head must be disapproving  
Bondage of loving.

Young, I served King Love, and my April squandered  
As his valiant trooper, and bore his standard,  
Which at Venus' shrine to her care I tender,  
Forced to surrender.

Now no more shall words of delight the sheerest,  
" Sweet, my soul, thou life of my life, my dearest,"  
Thrill me. They whose hearts have new blood to  
beat them,  
Hearing, repeat them.

I will find, to kindle my life, new physic,  
Seeking Truth in Physic and Metaphysic,  
Paths of worlds and stars in their orbits learning,  
Going, returning.

So, Farewell, my sonnets — Farewell, sweet-singing  
Odes, Farewell the dance and the lyre's soft ringing,  
Long Farewell, O love — thou must seek afar now,  
Losing Ronsard now.

## ON DEATH

**M**EANS death so much? Is it so great an ill  
As most men think? . . . Birth was not  
pain-bestead,  
And we shall feel no pain when we are dead.  
Let be! What birth began, death must fulfil.

“But thou shalt cease to be!” What then? . . .  
The chill

That leaves our bodies hueless, cold, and dread,  
Ends feeling too. The fateful Spinner’s thread  
Once broken, there’s no longing, wish, nor will.

“Thou shalt not eat.” I shall have no desire  
Toward meat or drink. The body by such fare  
Lengthens its life and our dependency;

The spirit needs them not. “But love, the fire  
Of joy, shall fail thee.” And I shall not care.  
He that escapes desire, at last is free.

## TRANSIT MUNDUS

**A**NOTHER *Winter comes. The last comes soon, I  
know.*

*For six and fifty years have blanched my head with  
snow.*

*The time is here to say, Farewell, to love and song,  
And take my leave of life's best days, for oh ! how  
long ! . . .*

*Yet I have lived. So much stands safe beyond recall.  
I grudge not life its joys. I have tasted one and all,  
Nor e'er refrained my hand from pleasures within  
reach,*

*Save but as Reason set due measure unto each.  
The part assigned me I have played on this life's  
stage*

*In costume fitted to the times and to my age.*

*I've seen the morning dawn, and evening come  
again.*

*I've seen the storm, the lightning-flash, the hail, the  
rain.*

*Peoples I've seen, and kings ! — For twenty years  
now past*

*I've seen each day rise upon France as though her  
last.*

*Wars I have seen, and strife of words, and terms of  
truce  
First made and then unmade again, then made by  
ruse  
To break and make again ! . . . I've seen that neath  
the moon  
All was but change and chance, and danced to  
Fortune's tune.  
Though man seek Prudence out for guide, it boots  
him naught ;  
Fate ineluctable doth hold him chained and caught,  
Bound hand and foot, in prison ; and all he may  
propose  
Fortune and Fate, wisely mayhap, themselves dis-  
pose.*

*Full-feasted of the world, even as a wedding-guest  
Goes from the banquet-hall, I go to my long rest ;  
As from a king's great feast, I go not with ill  
grace  
Though after me one come, and take the abandoned  
place.*

## PERMANET GLORIA

**I** HAVE wrought my work — more durable than  
steel ;  
And not swift-basting Time, nor winds, nor rain,  
Devouring waves, lightning, nor thunder-peal,  
Nor rage of storms, shall lay it low again.

In that last day and hour, when Death shall come  
And set hard sleep like stone upon my heart,  
Not all Ronsard shall pass beneath the tomb.  
There shall remain of him the better part.

Forever and forever, I shall live,  
Shall fly the wide world o'er, deathless and free,  
And haunt the fields to which my laurels give  
Immortal fame, by changeless Fate's decree ;

For that I joined two harpers of old time  
To the soft ringing of my ivory lyre  
And made them Vendôme by my new rhyme.  
Up, then, my Muse ! — carry to Heaven's choir

The glory I have gained, announce the claim  
That of full right I make in song's demesne !  
Then consecrate thy son to lasting fame  
And bind his brows with laurel ever green.

## RONSARD'S TOMB

**O** CAVES, and you, O springs  
The lofty mountain flings  
Downward along his sides  
With leaps and glides,

O woods, and sun-shot gleams  
Of wandering meadow-streams,  
And banks with flowers gay,  
List what I say —

When Fate and Heaven decree  
My hour is come to be  
Snatched from the light away  
Of common day,

Let none bring granite stones  
To build above my bones  
A tomb of noble height  
In Time's despite —

Not marble, but a tree  
Set to cast over me  
Shadows of billowy sheen,  
Forever green,

*And from my earth let spring  
An ivy, garlanding  
The grave, and round it wind  
Twisted and twined.*

*There shepherds with their sheep  
Coming each year to keep  
My festival, shall pay  
Their rites, and say :*

*“ Fair isle, great is thy grace,  
To be his resting-place,  
While all the universe  
Repeats his verse.*

*“ He taught the Muses’ pride  
To love our country-side,  
And dance our flowers among,  
To songs he sung.*

*“ He struck his lyre on high  
Fore’er to glorify  
Our mountains, crofts, and wealds,  
And blosmy fields.*

*" Let gentle manna fall  
Alway, above his pall,  
And dew that soft and still  
Spring nights distil.*

*" And let us keep his name,  
And glorying in his fame  
Each year bring him again  
Praise, as to Pan."*

*Thus shall the shepherd-troop  
Speak, and from many a cup  
Pour wine and milk for food  
And young lambs' blood*

*Above me, who shall then  
Be dwelling far from men,  
Where happy spirits blest  
Take their long rest,*

*Where Zephyr breathes his love  
O'er field and myrtle-grove  
And meadows at all hours  
New-decked with flowers,*

*Where care comes not, nor hate,  
Nor envy spurs the great  
To spread fell sorrow's dower  
For lust of power ;*

*In brotherly good-will  
All join, and follow still  
The crafts they used to love  
On earth above.*

*Ah, God ! to think, mine ear  
Alcæus' lyre shall hear,  
And Sappho's, over all  
Most musical !*

*See how the happy throngs  
Press near to hear their songs  
Till souls in woe rejoice  
Listing their voice,*

*Till Sisyphus forget  
His rock-worn toil and sweat,  
Till Tantalus obtain  
Surcease of pain. . . .*

*The sweet-toned lyre alone  
Can comfort hearts that moan  
And charm away all cares  
Of whoso hears.*



## NOTES

**THE TEXTS AND THE TRANSLATION.**—The texts of Ronsard differ greatly, and no one of them has predominant authority. Marty-Laveaux (“*Œuvres de Ronsard*,” Édition de la Pléiade, 1887–1893) has followed so far as possible the edition of 1584, which has the final sanction of Ronsard himself; but an almost unanimous judgment has pronounced this to be, in many cases, the poorest text. “Two or three years before his death,” says the old biography by Colletet, “being old and afflicted with the gout, and much subject to the attacks of melancholy, and being now almost abandoned by that poetic fury which had long kept him such good and faithful company, he made a new edition of his works . . . cutting out many beauteous and sprightly inventions, changing whole passages, and in place of noble and spirited lines, substituting others that had neither the force nor the fantasy of the first. For he took no account of this — that even though he were the father of his own works, yet it belongeth not to peevish and surly old age to judge the strokes of valiant youth.” “He changed and corrected much, and often for the worse,” says Sainte-Beuve less picturesquely but with more critical authority.

Blanchemain (“*Œuvres de Ronsard*,” Bibliothèque

Elzévirienne, 1857-1867) has followed as far as possible the *earliest* texts. But this is going to the other extreme. It is perfectly obvious that many of Ronsard's earlier revisions, at least, were improvements, and deserve to stand. Blanchemain has given many of them in his notes, and in the books of Selections still other variants often appear. "If ever," says Gandar, "a critical edition of Ronsard's Works were attempted, the variants would take up fully as much space as the text." Marty-Laveaux, who had edited critically the works of the other poets of the Pléiade, gave up the attempt when he came to Ronsard. "We wish that we might have given for this poet too," he says, "as we have done for most of those of the Pléiade, the successive changes of reading that he made in his works. But they are so numerous that it was impossible to think of doing so."

Any single text, therefore, is not sufficient for a knowledge of Ronsard, nor is it to be trusted in judging of the faithfulness of the translations. If the reader, for instance, following Blanchemain's or Becq de Fouquièrre's text, finds *ta bouche belle* translated by "thy lips twin-mated" (CARPE DIEM, p. 52), let him not accuse me of having intruded a fancy of my own, perhaps for the sake of the rhyme, until he has examined the other texts; for in Marty-Laveaux and Sainte-Beuve he will read *ta lèvre jumelle*. This instance is typical of a great many. Some of the more important ones are indicated in the Notes; but to give them all would require another small volume. The translations are in general faithful to what-

ever text of the passage in question seemed to me poetically the best — for there is no other standard of judging. In some cases I have taken the liberty of condensation ; never, I think, of expansion.

INTRODUCTION. — Page ix : *Noble family . . . branches of the royal blood.* — See the notes to Ronsard's twentieth Elegy, To RÉMY BELLEAU, in Blanchemain, iv. 298 ; and Rochambeau, " La Famille de Ronsart," 1868.

Page xxii : *Tasso . . .* — This was in 1571, when Tasso was twenty-three years old. See Tasso's " *Cataneo ovvero degli Idoli*," and A. Dupré's " *Relations du Tasse et de Ronsard*," Vendôme, 1874.

Page xxii : *Cassandre Salviati du Pré.* — It has generally been thought that the name Cassandra was a creation of the poet's classical fancy, in spite of express statements to the contrary by Binet and Muret, and an important passage of the younger poet D'Aubigné, who loved Cassandra's niece. Her identity has been discovered only within a year, and the strikingly romantic facts stated in the text have been established beyond question, by the researches of a student at the École des Chartes. See M. Gaston Deschamps' lectures on " *La Poésie française de la Renaissance*," in the " *Revue des Cours et Conférences*," May 15 and 22, 1902, with references there.

Page xxix: *Helen of Surgères.* — See Pierre de Nolhac, " *Le dernier Amour de Ronsard*," Paris, 1882.

Page 4 : LOVE'S CONQUERING. — The texts of this

Sonnet, the first of the "Amours," differ greatly. I have used those of Marty-Laveaux and Sainte-Beuve.

Compare the beginning of Petrarch's Sonnet 190 :

*Chi vuol veder, quantunque può natura . . .*

and of Seraphine's Strambotto : —

*Chi vuol veder gran cose altiere e nuove . . .*

quoted and imitated by Watson in the 21st "Sonnet" of his "Hecatompithia."

Page 5 : ONE ONLY AIM AND THOUGHT. — A translation of this sonnet, with the last two lines omitted, was made by Keats, and published for the first time in his "Life, Letters, and Literary Remains," by Lord Houghton. See Forman's edition of Keats, ii. 317.

The texts again differ very considerably. I have used that of Marty-Laveaux.

Page 6 : LOVE'S CHARMING. — Imitated from Petrarch, Sonnet 159 : —

*Grazie, ch'a pochi 'l ciel largo destina . . .*

Page 7 : A PICTURE AND A PLEA. — This is a little Renaissance painting, simple and exquisite. Ronsard has the pictorial faculty often. In a single stanza of the ODE TO MICHEL DE L'HOSPITAL he sketches a magnificent Titianesque image of Jove hurling the thunder,—

*Half bending down his breast,  
And lifting high his arm . . .*

With the last part of the sonnet, compare the 85th of

Shakspere's Sonnets, and the 8th of Spenser's Amoretti:—

You stop my tounge, and teach my hart to speake.

Page 10: LOVE'S WOUNDING.—This is one of the sonnet-ideas that made the tour of Europe in the sixteenth century, and had one or more versions in every language. There is another in French, by Baif, in his “Francine,” Book II. The earliest seems to be that by Bembo:—

*Si come suol, poiche 'l verno aspro e rio . . .*

which has been translated and paraphrased, in three different forms, by Drummond of Hawthornden (Works, Ward's edition, ii. 123–125). Some of Drummond's phrases were apparently taken from Ronsard, whom he does not mention, rather than from Bembo. For instance, in the next to the last line, Drummond has “In my young Spring,” and there is nothing in Bembo suggesting this, while Ronsard has *Sur l' Avril de mon âge*. It is interesting to notice, in the Hawthornden Manuscripts, published in *Archæologica Scotica*, iv. 74, Drummond's list of “Bookes red anno 1609, be me,” which includes: “La Franciade de Ronsard; Roland furieux, in Frenche; Azolains de Bembe, in Frenche; Amours de Ronsard; Hymnes de Ronsard; Les Odes de Ronsard; Elegies et Eclogues de Ronsard.” In the following year Drummond read Bembo in Italian “et en François;” and in 1612, in Italian alone.

There is nothing in any of the other versions to correspond to Ronsard's third line:—

*Pour mieux brouter la feuille emmiellée,*

or to his *Libre, folâtre* . . . etc. Beauties like these, of feeling and phrasing, and the way in which the whole breathes the fragrance of spring-time and of dawn, make Ronsard's sonnet seem the best of all the versions of this conventional idea. It has the same exquisite flavor as La Fontaine's lines on the "Petit Lapin:"—

*Il était allé faire à l'Aurore sa cour  
Parmi le thym et la rosée.*

This sonnet has been translated by Cary (the translator of Dante) in his "Early French Poets," page 102. He quotes Bembo's version, but does not speak of Drummond's.

Page 12: CASSANDRA'S PROPHECY.—From the text of Blanchemain. This prophecy—written certainly as early as Ronsard's twenty-seventh year, and probably some years earlier—was fulfilled in every point, except the conventional one of his dying for Cassandra's love. He grew gray at thirty, he died "ere evening," at sixty, his songs suddenly "withered, shorn of youth's fresh bloom," posterity "laughed his sighs to scorn," and made his "fame a by-word in the land." The exactness of it is almost poignantly pathetic.

*With thunder from the right* . . . —Omen of evil.

Page 16: *Like clouds in the wind it vanisheth*.—Compare Browning's "The Glove" ("Peter Ronsard loquitur"):—

Sire, I replied, joys prove cloudlets . . .

Page 20: TO THE BEES.—This charming lyric is one of those rejected by Ronsard in his over-critical old age, and excluded from the final edition of his works. The same is true of MESSENGER NIGHTINGALE, THE POWER OF SONG, and LAUREL'S WORTH, and of the sonnets ABSENCE IN SPRING, THE MUSES' COMFORTING, TO HIS VALET, KISSES AND DEATH, WITH FLOWERS, etc.

Page 22: LOVE ME, LOVE ME NOT.—Compare, in Thomas Lodge's story of "Rosalynde," Montanus' so-called "Sonnet:"—

Beyond compare my pain,  
Yet glad am I,  
If gentle Phœbe daine  
To see her Montan die.

Bullen says in his "Lyrics from Elizabethan Romances," page xi: "Lodge's lyric measures have frequently a flavor of Ronsard," and cites as an example, in "Rosalynde," the lyric beginning: "Phœbe sat" . . .

Page 24: LOVE'S QUICKENING.—I have found as many different versions of this important sonnet as I have seen texts. For the most part I follow Sainte-Beuve's, but for the last line, and some other less important variants, I have taken Blanchemain's.

This sonnet has been translated by Cary ("Early French Poets," page 101) and by Cosmo Monkhouse (Waddington's "Sonnets of Europe," page 123).

Page 25: . . . *You to whom I have said,  
"You and you only ever please my heart."*

Compare Ovid :—

Elige, cui dicas, tu mihi sola places ;

and Petrarch :—

*Col dolce honor, che d' amar quella hai preso,*  
A CU' IO DISSI, TU SOLA A ME PIACI.

(Note of Muret, 1553.) Compare also Victor Hugo :

À qui j'ai dit : Toujours, et qui m'a dit : Partout.

The texts again differ considerably. See Marty-Laveaux, i. 32, and Blanchemain, i. 40. This sonnet is not in any of the books of Selections from Ronsard.

Page 26: LOVE THE TEACHER AND INSPIRER. — This sonnet, perhaps the most beautiful in all Ronsard's work, has not only not been included in any book of Selections, but has not been quoted or mentioned by any critic, so far as I can find. It is the 100th sonnet of the first book of the "Amours." Blanchemain, i. 57; Marty-Laveaux, i. 48.

Other instances of sonnets translated here which are included in no book of Selections, so far as I can find, are THE POET'S GIFT (page 33), ABSENCE IN SPRING (29), THE MUSES' COMFORTING (32), KISSES AND DEATH (75), IF THIS BE LOVE (77), LOVE'S FLOWER (80), TO MARY STUART, QUEEN OF FRANCE (87), and ON DEATH (109) — all of them among the most beautiful sonnets ; the same is true of the poems IN DEAR VENDÔME (93), FAREWELL TO LOVE (108), and the splendid DIALOGUE OF RONSARD AND THE MUSES (102).

This gives some suggestion of the still undiscovered riches of Ronsard !

Page 27 : IN ABSENCE. — I know of no other sonnet, in any language, so full and so compact as this one. All Nature and all love seem crowded into it. Yet it is all “of one breath,” — one simple phrase — like many another of Ronsard’s, TRUE GIFT, for instance. He is indeed master of the sonnet-form.

On the forest of Gastine, the river Loir, and all of Ronsard’s home-country, see a charming article by Monsieur Jusserand — now Ambassador from France to the United States — in the “Nineteenth Century,” xli. 588–612 : “Ronsard and his Vendômois.”

The direct appeal, by name, to Gastine and Loir was cut out in the final edition by Ronsard, and the vague

*Et vous, rochers, les hôtes de mes vers*

substituted. This is a fair example of many unfortunate changes.

Page 29 : ABSENCE IN SPRING. — Compare Shakspeare, Sonnet 98.

Page 30 : THE THOUGHT OF DEATH. — Text of Blanchemain, i. 86. — Compare Shakspeare, Sonnets 27 and 44.

Page 31 : REMEMBERED SCENES. — Compare Spenser, Amoretti, no. 78, and Drummond of Hawthornden, Poems, the First Part, Sonnet 46. Drummond’s sonnet is said (Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, xi. 425) to have been taken

from Petrarch's Sonnet 72 (*Avventuroso piu d'altro terreno*), but it is closer to the 76th of Petrarch (*Senuccio, i' vo' che sappi in qual maniera*), especially in the tercets, and closer to Ronsard's than to either of Petrarch's. See the note on page 10. Ronsard's sonnet seems the best of them all, in simplicity and unity.

The texts differ considerably. I have used, for the most part, that of Blanchemain (i. 92). This sonnet has been translated, apparently from a different text, by Lord Lytton (Waddington's "Sonnets of Europe," page 120), and by Miss Katharine Hillard (Warner's Library of the World's Best Literature); both of them make the very curious error of taking *angelette* for a proper name! — misled, perhaps, by the capitalization of some old edition. The sonnet plays a leading role in Mr. Henry Harland's story, "The Lady Paramount."

Page 32: *My faithful mate who follows here and there.* — Taking the reading: —

*Qui deçà, qui de là, fidèle, m'accompagne.*

With the lines: —

*Would the nine Sisters might each season please  
To make my house with their fair gifts replete . . .  
Thyme blossoms not so sweet for honey-bees  
As their fair gifts upon my mouth are sweet . . .*

compare Theocritus, Idyl IX., lines 31-35: —

*τέττιξ μὲν τέττιγι φίλος, μύρμακι δὲ μύρμαξ,  
ἱρηκες δ' ἱρηξίν, ἐμὴν δέ τε Μοῖσα καὶ ᾠδά.  
τᾶς μοι πᾶς εἴη πλείους δόμος. οὔτε γὰρ ὕπνος*

οὐτ' ἔαρ ἐξαπίνας γλυκώτερον, οὔτε μελίσσαις  
ἀνθεα· τόσσον ἐμὶν Μοῖσαι φίλαι . . .

(“Cicala is dear to cicala, . . . but to me the Muse and song. Of this may all my house be full, for neither sleep, nor Spring that comes unlooked-for, is more sweet — nor flowers are more sweet to honey-bees — so dear to me are the Muses.”)

Page 33 : THE POET'S GIFT. — With this sonnet compare HER IMMORTALITY, page 81. The idea of these two sonnets often occurs elsewhere in Ronsard. Compare Spenser's Amoretti, 75, 82, and especially 69. The same idea is constantly recurring in Shakspeare's sonnets, from the 17th on.

Page 38 : *Aratus*. — Aratus was a Greek poet of the third century B. C., who wrote in verse a treatise on astronomy, called the “Phenomena.” It was translated into Latin verse by Cicero. After Ronsard's study of it, his friend Rémy Belleau, another poet of the Pléiade, translated it into French.

Aratus' name, if known now, is known for quite other reasons than his “dreary” poem on astronomy ; for Theocritus sang of Aratus' love in his seventh Idyl, and Saint Paul quoted him to the Athenians : “As certain also of your own poets have said . . .”

The texts vary, especially in the second stanza, and at the end.

Page 40 : TO THE HAWTHORN-TREE. — “A masterpiece of grace and freshness.” (Sainte-Beuve.)

Translated by Cary ("Early French Poets," page 114).

*Rival camps of scurrying ants —*

from the reading: —

*Deux camps de drillants fourmis.*

*Nightingale the chorister —*

from

*Le chantre rossignolet.*

*In thy top, etc.*

from

*Sur ta cime il fait son nid*

*Bien garni*

*De laine et de fine soie.*

Page 45: MARIE, ARISE. — "These *mignardises* are fairer in their simplicity than all the subtle inventions of the Spanish and some of the Italians." (Note of Belleau, 1560.)

Page 52: *Dost think to kiss King Pluto's mouth,*" etc. — This is imitated by Watson in his "Hecatompactia," the last part of "Sonnet" 27. Watson has also imitated Ronsard, avowedly, in his 54th and 83d "Sonnets," and unavowedly in his 92d, which is taken from LOVE'S ATTRIBUTES, page 13. Both Ronsard and Watson may have taken some suggestions from Phædrus (iii. 17), but in very important variations from Phædrus Watson seems to follow Ronsard.

Page 54: LOVE'S LESSON. — Compare Catullus: —

Soles occidere et redire possunt ;  
Nobis cum semel occidit brevis lux,  
Nox est perpetua una dormienda.  
Da mi basia mille, deinde centum, etc.

Page 61 : NATURE'S DRINKING-SONG. — Imitated directly from the Anacreontea, no. 19 (Bergk, "Poetæ lyrici Græci," fourth edition, iii. 310).

Page 62 : *The coming morrows' time* (*Le temps futur du lendemain*). — Compare Horace : —

Quid sit futurum cras, fuge quaerere.

Page 63 : . . . Estienne,

*Who saved from Lethe's treasures . . . etc.*

The Anacreontea were discovered and published from the manuscript by Ronsard's friend, the famous printer and humanist Henry Estienne, in 1554. They were soon translated, entire, by Rémy Belleau. See Ronsard's ode to him, beginning: *Tu es un trop sec biberon . . .*

Page 64 : THE PRAISE OF ROSES. — Imitated, in part, from the Anacreontea, no. 5 (Bergk, iii. 322).

Page 69 : SWEET-HEART, COME SEE IF THE ROSE. — This is Ronsard's best-known lyric. It has been translated by Mr. Andrew Lang ("Ballads and Lyrics of Old France"), by Miss Hillard (Library of the World's Best Literature), and, anonymously, in "Poems You Ought to Know," published by the Chicago Tribune. ✓

Page 70 : LIFE'S ROSES. — This is Ronsard's best- ✓

known sonnet. The text can be found in any anthology, and fortunately there are only two slight variants—one of them, however, important: in the second line, the best reading is certainly *dévidant* (“winding thread”) and not *devisant* (“gossiping”).

It has been translated by Mr. Lang (in “Grass of Parnassus”), by Miss Hillard, and by Mr. C. Kegan Paul (Waddington’s “Sonnets of Europe”), and paraphrased by Thackeray. The translation by Mr. Lang is perhaps the best existing version in English of anything by Ronsard. But he does not render either *dévidant* or *devisant*, and unfortunately omits altogether the *en vous émerveillant*, at the end of the third line—that touch of ever-new wonder at the beauty of the old songs, and of ever-new amazement that they were written for that maiden who so strangely was and is not she.

Page 74: *That Lady* . . . —“He signifieth the Helen of the Greeks, who ravished even those that by hearsay had conceived but an imagination and fantasy of her beauty.” (Note of Nicholas Richelet.)

Page 76: WITH FLOWERS. — Compare the Greek Anthology: “I send thee, Rhodoclea, this crown that with my own hands I have woven thee, of beauteous flowers; there is a lily, a rosebud, a wet anemone, a warm narcissus, and the darkly bright violet. Wear thou this crown, and cease to be too proud. For thou dost bloom and die — thou, and the crown.” (Quoted by Sainte-Beuve, “Causeries du Lundi,” Oct. 13, 1855.)

*Time passes swift, my love, ah ! swift it flies !  
Yet no—not Time, alas ! but we—we pass.*

See Mr. Austin Dobson's variations on the theme of these two lines, in "The Paradox of Time" (Old-World Idyls, page 175).

Page 79 : LOVE'S RECORDING. — This is the sonnet beginning, in Blanchemain's text: —

*Fauche, garçon, d'une main pilleresse,  
Le bel esmail de la verte saison,  
Puis à plein poing en-jonche la maison  
Des fleurs qu' Avril enfante en sa jeunesse.*

It has been translated by Lord Lytton (Waddington, "Sonnets of Europe," page 121) from a very different text.

Page 80: LOVE'S FLOWER. — Blanchemain, i. 54: *Prends cette rose . . .* This is another of the many beautiful sonnets included in no book of Selections. See note on page 26.

Page 85: 'TWIXT LOVE AND DEATH. — Blanchemain, i. 366. This is the last of Ronsard's love-sonnets. Charles IX. died on May 30, 1574. However weak he may have been as a king—and he is doubtless painted worse than he was—he was a generous and on the whole intelligent patron of the arts, and a close friend, almost comrade, of Ronsard, who saw his best side, and seems to have had a sincere love for him. They exchanged verses on several occasions. The follow-

ing are the best known among those attributed to the king : —

CHARLES IX. TO RONSARD

*To be a poet is a higher thing,  
Whate'er men say, than even to be a king!  
We both alike bear crowns whose glory lives,  
But kings receive them, and the poet gives.  
Thy mind, on fire with Heaven's especial Grace,  
Shines of itself, I by my height of place.  
If toward the Gods our rank I seek to try,  
Thou art their favorite, and their image I.  
Thy Muse with sweet accords men's passion binds —  
Though I their bodies, thou dost sway their minds;  
Thy mastership is such, it makes thee rule  
Where proudest tyrants ne'er have held control.  
I can give men their death by my decree;  
But thou canst give them immortality.*

Unfortunately some doubt must be felt about the authenticity of these lines. The style of a later age seems to show through, even in the translation.

Page 86: COUNSEL FOR KINGS. — Blanchemain, vii. 37–38, *passim*. This advice, somewhat in the Polonius vein, was addressed to Charles IX. It at least shows Ronsard's independent attitude toward the court.

Page 87: TO MARY STUART, QUEEN OF FRANCE. — Blanchemain, v. 304.

*England's Queen.* — After the death of Mary Tudor, the Guises induced Mary Stuart, then Dauphine of

France, to assume the sovereignty of England. According to the point of view which did not recognize the marriage of Henry VIII. with Anne Boleyn, Mary Stuart was the legitimate heir to the throne of England, through her grandmother Margaret, the daughter of Henry VII.

She was Queen of France from June, 1559, to December, 1560.

Page 88 : REGRET. — This consists of two fragments from a long poem on the fortunes of Mary Stuart ; Blanchemain, vi. 24, 26.

Page 89 : THE SAME SUBJECT. — This is the beginning of a much longer poem ; Blanchemain, vi. 10.

“ There is more true and earnest feeling in some little verses by Ronsard on the unhappy Queen of Scots, than in all the elegant, fanciful, but extravagant flattery of Elizabeth’s poets.” No wonder, for she possessed the beauty and the charm which Elizabeth, with all her power, lacked. The men of the Renaissance saw Beauty born anew, and worshipped Her, like their masters the Greeks. Ronsard goes even further than Homer, and makes the old men on the Trojan wall say of Helen : —

*Not all our ills are worth one look of hers !*

Mary Stuart was the Helen of the Renaissance. We need have no sympathy with those over-zealous advocates who would whitewash away all the crimson color of her life. She sinned greatly, no doubt. But she was still more sinned against. Ronsard knew her in the

sweet purity and wonderful precocious charm of her girlhood as Queen of France, and remained loyal to her through long misfortune and captivity — as the splendid arraignment and appeal of the next sonnet, written only the year before his death, will show.

Page 104 : LIFE-PHILOSOPHY. — This poem has been translated by Miss Hillard, who compares it with Chaucer's "Ballad of Good Counsel." Compare also Horace's Ode iii. of Book iii. : —

*Justum et tenacem propositi virum . . .*

especially the lines : —

*Si fractus illabatur orbis  
Impavidum ferient ruinae.*

Page 108 : — FAREWELL TO LOVE. — Though Ronsard calls these verses "Sapphics," the Sapphic stanza properly speaking cannot exist in French. What Ronsard uses is probably the nearest possible equivalent for it — a stanza consisting of three eleven-syllable lines with *cæsura* after the fifth syllable, followed by one five-syllable line, and rhyming as in the translation, except that in this poem, and in all his "Sapphics," Ronsard confines himself to masculine rhymes.

Page 112 : PERMANET GLORIA. — Compare Horace, Ode xxx. of Book iii. : —

*Exegi monumentum ære perennius,*

and the whole ode. Compare also Ovid : —

Jamque opus exegi, quod nec Jovis ira, nec ignes  
Nec poterit ferrum, nec edax abolere vetustas.

*Two harpers of old time.* — Pindar and Horace.

Page 113 : RONSARD'S TOMB. — Blanchemain, ii. 249 ; and most books of Selections. Some stanzas of this poem have been translated by Mr. Lang, in "Rhymes à la Mode." There is also a translation of the whole poem, by J. P. M., in Blackwood's Magazine, cxxxvi. 716.

By the beauty of its Nature-worship, its joy in Song, its quiet acceptance of life and of death, the simplicity of its expression, and the purity of its form, this poem is one of the few modern examples of perfect classic art.

APR 22 1915

FOUR HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE COPIES  
OF THIS BOOK WERE PRINTED AT THE  
RIVERSIDE PRESS CAMBRIDGE  
IN THE MONTH OF MAY  
MDCCCIII  
NO. 363











